A N

ESSAY

CONCERNING

Civil Government,

Conſider'd as it ſtands related to

RELIGION.

WHEREIN

The MAGISTRATE's Right to ſupport and encourage TRUE RELIGION by Human Laws is aſſerted, againſt the modern Pleaders for an abſolute, unreſtrained TOLERATION.

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THE PREFACE.

THE late Controverſies having led me to conſider the Queſtion concerning the Magiſtrate's Authority in Matters of Religion, I now offer my Thoughts of it to the World. The Uſefulneſs of the Subject, muſt be my Apology for publiſhing them now; and the Difficulty of it, my Excuſe for not publiſhing them ſooner. The one may invite the Attention of the Reader; The other certainly demands great Caution and Circumſpection in the Writer: And if by delaying I have gained this Advantage, that the Book comes out the more perfect; I may likewiſe hope that, the Heat of Contention being now pretty well over, it

may be read with the more Calmneſs and Impartiality.

There are two different Ways in which this Point may be handled. One conſiders the Magiſtrate's Authority as it is originally *in itſelf, or abſtracted from all* Limitations *which Revelation may have introduced: The other conſiders it as relative to the Authority of the* Church, *which tho' it does not* deſtroy *the Magiſtrate's Authority, does yet* direct *it in many Caſes, where Religion is concerned. I confine myſelf at preſent to the firſt of theſe, and in treating about it, have ſet down nothing but what appears to me to flow from evident Principles of Reaſon, and the general Experience of the World. I mean not here to promiſe* Demonſtration: *You muſt expect none, becauſe the Subject will admit of none. The Queſtion is,* What Courſe muſt the Magiſtrate take to ſupport and encourage true Religion; *for which he that ſhould preſume to lay down an* univerſal, infallible *Method, would*

would deſerve no other Regard than a Pretender who boaſts that he has found out a never-failing Remedy to cure all Diſeaſes. All we can ſay is, That *is the* beſt *Method which will do* moſt good: *And in judging even of this, ſo much will always depend upon the Tempers and Diſpoſitions of Men (which can be reduced to no certain Rule) that perhaps it lies not within the Reach of the wiſeſt Man on Earth, to ſay, with Aſſurance, preciſely* what it is. *Room then here will be, for cavilling to thoſe who are beſt pleaſed with finding Fault. But to thoſe who are diſpoſed to judge equitably, and will accept of ſuch Proof as the Nature of the Thing will allow, I do not deſpair of giving this reaſonable Satisfaction; that if I ſhew them not the* beſt *Method, I ſhew them a* good *one, or at leaſt a* better *than thoſe Writers have ſhewn, who tell us, That the* beſt *Thing the Magiſtrate can do in this Caſe, is* to do Nothing.

After

After all I am ſenſible, that the enſuing Tract is ſo diſproportionate to what the Subject might very well bear, that I venture not to give it any higher Title than that of an ESSAY; *which I ſhould be glad to ſee corrected or improved by any, who know how to profit either by what they like in it, or by what they do not.*

THE

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A

DEFENCE

OF THE

Magiſtrates Right, &c.

The INTRODUCTION.

HAving ſhewn in a former Treatiſe, what are the proper Methods of ſupporting Chriſtianity, ſo far as it concerns the Governours of the *Church*; I now proceed to conſider the ſame Point as it has Relation to the Office of the *Civil Magiſtrate*. As the Motive which led me to the former was the Vindication of our *Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitution*; ſo that which determines me to the latter, is the Juſtification of our *Civil Eſtabliſhment*, which hath the ſame Adverſaries to deal with: Thoſe who

have repreſented the one as deſtructive of Chriſtian Liberty, having alſo repreſented the other as an encroachment upon Civil Right and Property, and no leſs an Invaſion upon the Prerogative of Chriſt. To ſay the Truth, this ſeems to be the moſt material Part of the Controverſy: not only as it is of a more nice and intricate Nature; but becauſe the Right it pleads for ſeems to have made the moſt ſenſible Impreſſion upon the Spirits of thoſe who have of late appeared againſt us with ſo much bitterneſs. For I can eaſily perſuade my ſelf that the Church might have been let alone in her Claims of *Spiritual Powers*, if, by the Favour of the *State*, ſhe had not been veſted with *Civil Privileges*.

I ſhall not pretend in this Place, to give the Reader an exact Draught of this New Scheme. If any one can want it after ſo much has been written upon the Subject, he will be able to frame one for himſelf, when he has viewed it in its main Branches, the Conſideration of which is the Deſign of the following Diſcourſe. It needs only to be remarked, that the Exception lies, not ſo much againſt any thing that is *peculiar* in our *Legal Eſtabliſhment*, as againſt all ſuch Eſtabliſhments in general; *i. e.* it lies againſt *all Right* in the Magiſtrate to ſupport Religion by his Civil Authority. I wonder not that thoſe, who (if one might judge by their Conduct) ſeem

to

to be for making a full end of the Church, ſhould leave her as little Support from without, as they have left her from within: But ſurely it muſt appear very unaccountable to any thinking Man, that in a Point of ſo much Conſequence, the whole World ſhould ſo long have been miſtaken. For that it is the concern of every Civil Magiſtrate to promote God's true Religion, is a Maxim as old as Religion and Civil Government. The Methods of attempting it have indeed been different, in different Ages, and in different Countries: But as to the Thing in general, all Nations have agreed in it, and all (*a*) Writers have juſtified it. But I do not expect that the Point ſhould be decided by Authorities, which our Modern Schemiſts, as if they were raiſed up by Providence to be the great Reformers of Common Senſe, have long ſince learn't to deſpiſe. I will bring the Caſe to the Bar of Reaſon: And if this Maxim can be made good; 'tis to be hoped that Chriſtianity may come in for its ſhare in the Benefits of it, and our Legiſlators may appear to have deſerved another kind of Treat-

(*a*) Omnes qui de Republica aliquid lectu dignum ſcripſere, *jus* in *Sacra* non *partem* tantum Summi Imperii, ſed etiam *potiſſimam* atq; *præcipuam* vocant. *Grotius*, De Imp. Sum. Pot. Cap. 1. Sect 8. *Again*, Nulla in re magis eluceſcit vis Summi Imperii, quam quod in ejus arbitrio eſt, quænam Religio publice exerceatur; idq; *præcipuum* inter Majeſtatis *jura*, ponunt omnes qui *Politica* ſcripſerunt, *Ibid.* Cap. 8. Sect. 2.

ment than they have lately met with, on account of the Priviledges allowed us. But if not, we ought to be as ready to give up theſe Priviledges, as others are deſirous that they ſhould be given up: for Chriſtianity muſt not be ſupported, nor does it indeed want to be ſupported, by any Methods that are not juſtifiable.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Whether it be poſſible for the Magiſtrate, by the Methods of Civil Adminiſtration, to promote the Intereſt of God's true Religion.

THE general Point being now ſtated, it will be neceſſary as a Preliminary to the whole, to reſolve one very material Queſtion: *viz.* Whether it be *poſſible* in the *nature* of the *Thing*, for the Magiſtrate by the Methods of Civil Adminiſtration to promote the Intereſt of God's true Religion. It has of late been very ſtrenuouſly maintained that it is *not:* And if this be true, the Diſpute is at an end: it being abſurd to ſuppoſe that any Thing ſhould be a matter of *Right* or *Duty* in the Civil Magiſtrate, which in the nature of Things is abſolutely out of his Power. Now the Foundation of this Notion, is this; That the Magiſtrate (*b*) *by all he can do*, CAN only influence the *outward Behaviour* and *Practice*. Whereas, ſay they, true Religion conſiſts not merely in any external Conformity to any particular way of Worſhip, even tho' that way be of Divine Appointment; but it conſiſts in a Conformity to the Law of God, upon a true *inward Principle*, i. e. upon a Principle of *Obedience* to God, under (*c*) the Influence of the *Motives* of a *Life to come*. Whether the being influenced by the Motives of a Life to come be *eſſential* to the Notion of *true Religion*, I ſhall not now ſtay to enquire; becauſe

(*b*) See *Anſw.* to the *Repreſentation*, p. 160. 167. 172, 173. 179. (*c*) *Ibid.* p. 173, and in many other places.

which way ſoever this Point be determined, it cannot alter the State of the Queſtion between us. That a true *Inward Principle* is eſſential to it there can be no doubt; and conſequently it muſt be granted that if it be not in the Magiſtrates power to encourage and promote this *inward Principle*, it is not in his Power to promote *true Religion*. This Difference therefore, I ſay, muſt firſt of all be decided; in doing which I muſt beg the liberty of purſuing that Method which appears to me to be moſt natural, promiſing my Reader not to omit taking Notice of every material Objection as it falls in my way.

Religion then (I ſay) in the Senſe in which it is now to be conſidered, muſt be founded, 1. In the *Knowledge* of the Divine Will. And, 2. In a due Apprehenſion of the weight of thoſe *Motives*, by which it becomes reaſonable that God ſhould be obeyed in whatever he commands us. For he who underſtands his Duty, and practiſes it becauſe it is ſo, *i. e.* becauſe he judges it to be fitting and reaſonable, is in the moſt compleat and perfect Senſe a Religious Man. Now the immediate, adequate, Cauſe of the former (in thoſe Caſes where our own Reaſon alone is not able to direct us) is *Inſtruction*; for what we cannot learn of ourſelves, we muſt be taught by the Information of others. But to the latter, ſomething more is required. For a Man may know his Duty well, and yet for want of due Attention to what he underſtands, be very negligent in the Performance of it. From hence therefore it follows; That if, by the Methods of Civil Adminiſtration the Magiſtrate may provide either that Inſtruction in the Knowledge of God's true Religion be the better adminiſtred; or that when duly adminiſtred it may have the greater

Weight

Weight and Influence upon the Minds of Men; it muſt then be poſſible for the Magiſtrate to promote the Intereſt of God's true Religion. And that he may provide for both, is as plain to me as any thing can be. For he may provide for the better Adminiſtration of Inſtruction in the true Religion, 1. By providing a proper Maintenance for the Teachers of true Religion; 2. By endowing publick Schools, and other Seminaries of good Learning, and Religious Education; Which ways will become yet more effectual, 3. By prohibiting the ſame Methods, when they ſhall be made Uſe of to ſupport any falſe Religion, in oppoſition to the true. I enquire not now, how far all this is *right* and *fitting*; This muſt be conſider'd in another place. And 'tis a Caution which I muſt deſire the Reader conſtantly to bear in his Mind, that my Buſineſs under this Head is to ſhew, not what the Magiſtrate may do in the Notion of *Juſtice*, but what he may do in the Notion of *Natural Poſſibility*. In this Senſe then I ſay 'tis evident that the Magiſtrate *may* by the ſeveral ways above mentioned, provide for the better Adminiſtration of Inſtruction: the Tendency of which, ſince it is not merely to regulate the outward Behaviour, but alſo, and that primarily, to direct the Underſtanding to that true Knowledge of God, which lays the Foundation of a Religious Principle; That muſt therefore be falſe which hath been maintained Abſolutely and without Reſerve, *viz.* that the Magiſtrate *by all he can do*, CANNOT promote true Religion, nor any more than influence the outward Behaviour. It would be ridiculous here to alledge that the true Religion under this State of the Caſe, is promoted by thoſe who *inſtruct*, and not by the *Magiſtrate*. The direct, imme-

diate Cauſe, without doubt is, and muſt be, Inſtruction. But then the Magiſtrate, thro' whoſe means Inſtruction is adminiſtred, concurs to it as a principal, tho' more *remote*, Inſtrument: which is all that any one means or can mean, when he ſpeaks of the Magiſtrates Power to promote Religion by the Methods of Civil Adminiſtration.

This Point being duly attended to, the Reader will very eaſily perceive how far the Reaſoning of our Adverſaries upon this Head, comes ſhort of the Matter under Conſideration. For how does it appear that it is not in the Magiſtrates Power, *by all he can do*, to promote true Religion, nor any more than to Influence the outward Behaviour? Why the Subſtance of all that has been ſaid amounts to thus much, and no more; to wit, That the *Motives* of *this World* (i. e. the *Honours* and *Profits* of this World on the one Hand, and the *Hardſhips* and *Inconveniencies* of this World on the other) can no more than Influence the outward Behaviour. That is to ſay (for this is what they mean) if you want to bring a Man over to, or keep him ſtedfaſt in, the true Religion; the propoſing to him *v. g.* a Place at Court if he complies, or the laying him under certain Penalties if he refuſes, cannot reach his Heart ſo as to make him truly Religious, tho' it may occaſion an outward Conformity. But what is this to the Purpoſe, ſuppoſing it to be true? I hope for all this, that good Salaries may procure good School-Maſters; and good Benefices Sound and Orthodox Paſtors, who 'tis likely may think it their Buſineſs to tell thoſe who are under their Care, not how to get great Eſtates, but how to become Wiſe and Good; and may lead them to their Duties, not

by

by applying the Motives of this World, but by enforcing the Motives of a Life to come. In conſidering the Uſe of worldly Motives with regard to Religion, we muſt not attend merely to the Effects they will have upon thoſe who are under the *immediate* Advantages, or Diſadvantages of them. We muſt extend our Thoughts to thoſe Effects alſo, which they will produce *remotely* upon *others*, which (as will be ſhewn more fully afterwards) are of far the greater Conſequence. If I pay a Man a yearly Stipend for inſtructing my Child, what I give is the purchaſe of his Labour, Skill, and Induſtry; and the *Scholar* may ſurely make a good Uſe of what he *learns*, tho' the *Maſter* makes a Bad one of what he *receives*. In like manner, if a good Benefice has no tendency to beget a right Faith in the Preacher; no Man will be ſo abſurd as to ſay that his Doctrine (ſuppoſing it to be as it ought) has no tendency to inform the Underſtandings, and regulate the Manners of his Hearers. As this is a Conſideration obvious enough, of itſelf; ſo it is by much too material to have been overlooked by the late Writers in this Controverſy. But it will be proper to purſue the Point yet farther, and to conſider the Effect of worldly Motives, even upon thoſe who are immediately under the Influence of them; by which it will more fully appear, how little Truth there is in what has been laid down with ſo much Aſſurance, *viz.* That Temporal *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* have no tendency to beget any thing more than a mere external Conformity. We have been told (and by the way, we have *only* been told) that (*d*) *it is not in the*

(*d*) Ibid. p. 149. 150.

power

Power of Men by ALL *the good Things of this World put together, to encourage Religion in the* ESSENTIALS *of it*, or (as it is expreſſed a little after) *to create the Inward Eſſentials of Religion.* That (*e*) *the Effect of Worldly Motives is* NONE AT ALL *towards any thing but* OUTWARD BEHAVIOUR *and* PROFESSION; and that (*f*) *Worldly Sanction* NEVER *made* ANY ONE *Man* TRULY *Religious.* Theſe are ſtrong Terms; and if the meaning of them be that Temporal Motives are not diſpoſed by any *direct immediate* Efficacy to beget the Inward eſſentials of Religion; the Thing is indeed too plain to admit of any Deliberation. But it will anſwer the Purpoſe every whit as well, if *indirectly* or by any *remote* Efficacy they may operate this way: And if our Adverſaries mean to deny this; it will become them however to be leſs poſitive till they can find ſome good Reaſon to ſupport them. For in this Senſe ſo far is it from being true, that Temporal Motives never made *any one* Man truly Religious; that by God's Grace they have made *many* ſo: And I look upon them to be very proper Means in the Magiſtrates Hand to ſecure the *good effect* of Inſtruction, whilſt they are a bridle to Men's Paſſions, and give a ſeaſonable Check to that *Careleſneſs* and *Inconſiderateneſs* which unqualifies them to receive the Impreſſions of Truth and Virtue. This effect of worldly Motives is eaſy enough to be diſcerned in other Caſes, where Men's private Views are not ſo nearly concerned; that is, where the Spirit of a Party, which is for the moſt part the Spirit of Contradiction hath not blinded their Eyes. A Father, for inſtance,

(*e*) Ibid. p. 170. (*f*) Ibid. p. 213.

applys

applys Temporal Motives in the Management of his Child. To what end? Is it merely to regulate the *outward Behaviour?* No ſurely; A ſenſible Man will certainly anſwer in ſuch a Caſe, that it is with a Deſign to *mend* his *Manners* and make him *good.* This I muſt own were a fooliſh Pretence upon our Adverſaries Scheme: But as fooliſh as it is, he that was wiſer than the wiſeſt of them all, has told us that *the Rod of Reproof giveth Wiſdom.* How ſo? Is Wiſdom the effect of Force? Have Bodily Pleaſure or Bodily Pain any tendency to convince the Underſtanding and reform the Heart? Whether it will be born or not, I ſhall make bold to appear on the part of *Solomon* and ſay, *Yes.* But how? Why not that the ſmart of the Rod can reach the Conſcience; nor that the Sugar-Cake which the Child eats, digeſts itſelf into a Religious Principle: But the Caſe is (as I ſaid juſt now) that by this Method you apply to the *Paſſions* and compoſe thoſe Inward Tumults, which ſo long as they prevail, obſtruct the Influences of Natural Light, and by conſequence ſtop the way to true Wiſdom and Virtue. This I ſay, is the proper Effect of Worldly Motives: Not that they do *of themſelves* beget true Religion; but, that they put Men into a fit *Temper* and *Diſpoſition* to *receive* it: Not that they are at all proper to *convince*; but that they remove thoſe *Impediments* by which Men are rendred *uncapable* of *Conviction.*

The Reader will doubtleſs take Notice, that the Application of Temporal Motives is ſuppoſed to be attended with that from which indeed it ought never to be ſeparated, to wit, the Uſe of the proper means of Conviction. And after this hint, there is nothing I conceive

in this Account but what any Man of a tolerable Capacity may eaſily underſtand. It will be vain here to alledge, that tho' this Method be proper with reſpect to *Children*; it may *not* be ſo with reſpect to *Men*. For ſo far as *Men* are governed by Paſſion and not by Reaſon; ſo far they *degenerate* into *Children*; and ſo far therefore, it muſt be proper to deal with them as ſuch. The Propriety of this Method reſults not from any thing by which a *perverſe Child* is diſtinguiſhable from an *unreaſonable Man*; but from ſomething which in a greater or in a leſſer Degree is common to them both. That in which a *perverſe Child* differs from an *Unreaſonable Man*, is this; that he hath a leſs meaſure of Underſtanding: But in this they both agree, that the one is led by his Paſſions to contradict that Meaſure of Underſtanding which he has as well as the other. Now the ſame Diſeaſe under a like Conſtitution naturally calls for the ſame Remedy: And ſince in both Caſes it is by the Motives of this World that our Paſſions riſe into Mutiny and become a Party againſt the Truth; the ſame ſort of Motives contrarily applyed muſt alſo in both Caſes be the proper Means of reducing them into Order. What Reaſon ſuggeſts to us upon this Head, Experience alſo verifies. For has any one ſo little Knowledge, or ſo little Charity as to ſay, that there have not been many Inſtances of *Men*, as well as of *Children*, who by wholſome Severities or ſeaſonable Encouragenents, have been reclaimed from evil Courſes? Has no one either ſeen or heard of a *Malefactor* who whilſt under Sentence of Condemnation, has been brought to a better Mind? Tho' ſuch Caſes are not ſo frequent as one would wiſh; yet I truſt in God, and we have I think great

Reaſon

Reaſon to believe that the World has not wholly been without them. And whence? Why the *Ordinary* of the Place, perhaps you'l ſay, has diſcharged his Duty; or ſome Charitable and well diſpoſed Perſons have been diligent in applying good Advice and ſober Inſtruction. It may be ſo; and who doubts but theſe are proper and neceſſary Helps to the bringing of Sinners to Repentance. But let me ask one Queſtion or two more? Do you believe that good Advice *alone* would have done the Buſineſs? Do you not think that the Inſtruction adminiſtred received ſome *weight* from the *Condition* of the Offender; or rather that it was entirely owing to this, that he was found in a fit Temper and Diſpoſition to be wrought upon by Perſuaſion? Theſe are the Points I would propoſe upon the Caſe before us; and the Deciſion of them I willingly leave to any Man of common Obſervation.

If any Thing elſe be wanting to make the Argument yet plainer; I deſire it may not be forgotten, that God himſelf is pleaſed to make uſe of this Method for the ſame Purpoſe. That he might the more effectually lead us to the Obſervance of his Laws, he hath ſo order'd it that the Breach of them (according to the Natural Order and Conſtitution of Things) is generally attended with the Inconveniencies of this World; and in the extraordinary Exerciſe of his Providence, he hath declared this to be the End of his *afflicting and grieving the Children of Men*, (not to Cloath them with a mere *outſide Shew*, which he hates and abhors, but) *that they may be partakers of his Holineſs*. May not then ſome one expoſtulate with the Almighty in the Modern way of Reaſoning and ſay; "Is Holi-

"neſs

" neſs the Effect of Force? Of Bodily Pleaſure " or of Bodily Pain? Is it *Religion* to abſtain " from Drunkenneſs, for fear of Surfeiting, or " from Whoredom to avoid the Rottenneſs of " the Bones? Why then, ſince thou deſireſt a " free and willing Service, haſt thou not left us " free? Thou haſt given us a Reaſonable Soul; " Thou haſt preſcribed us reaſonable Laws; " thou haſt propoſed to us the Motives of a " Life to come, as an Encouragement to us to " do as we are commanded; and Obedience " performed under the Influence of theſe Rea- " ſons, and with a View to theſe Motives, is the " only Obedience which thou has promiſed to " accept. Why then doſt thou go about to De- " ſtroy as it were the Work of thine own " Hands, in propoſing to effect that by Worldly " Motives, which Worldly Motives can never " produce?" If our Adverſaries can tell how to ſilence this impious and vain Babler, I will undertake, by thoſe very Arguments they ſhall make uſe of, to anſwer *Them.* For the Caſe is thus far parallel to the other; that here is the Uſe or Application of the Motives of this World to this Intent, and for this Purpoſe, even the begetting true Religion, which is the Abſurdity they complain of. I know it has been obſerved that (g) *when God himſelf has threatned Temporal Judgments; the being moved by theſe as they come from God, is an Act of Faith in him, and no ſuch worldly Inducement as God diſapproves of.* But this Obſervation does not reach the whole of the Objection, nor is it indeed any thing to the Purpoſe. I ſay, 1ſt, It doth not reach the whole

(g) Ibid. p. 233.

of

of the Objection. For my Argument is drawn not only from thoſe Evils which are properly the *Judgments* of God upon Sinners; but from thoſe Inconveniencies which in the *Order* of *Nature* do generally attend upon wicked Preachers. 'Tis no Act of *Faith* for a Man to believe, that if he plays the Glutton or the Drunkard over Night he ſhall be Sick the next Morning. Yet this is commonly the Caſe; God hath ſo adjuſted the Frame of our Natures, that we can ſeldom offend him without bringing down ſome preſent Miſchief upon ourſelves: In which Diſpenſation there is certainly leſs Wiſdom, not to ſay Goodneſs, than there would have been, had it otherwiſe been ordered; if it be true that worldly Inconveniencies not only cannot promote, but do even deſtroy true Religion. Again; This Argument relates not merely to thoſe Judgments of God which are *viſibly* ſo, and are *conſidered* by us *as ſuch*; but even to thoſe *ſecret* Act of his Providence, which we cannot diſtinguiſh from thoſe Effects which reſult from the *Natural* Order and Conſtitution of Things. When God by a ſpecial Warning tells us before hand (as he told the *Ninevites*) that we ſhould be deſtroyed unleſs we Repent; our Repenting in Virtue of this warning is indeed properly an Act of *Faith*, or rather it is the *Effect* of our Faith. But in the ordinary Courſes of his Providence, God chaſtiſes us without giving us any certain Tokens by which we may know that it is his Hand; and altho' even in this Caſe there is Room enough for the Exerciſe of *Faith* (God's *general* Threatnings ſupplying in ſome ſort the want of a ſpecial Warning) yet I do not think it to be abſolutely neceſſary to the End propounded, *i. e.* to the Amendment of the Sinner. If

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it were, God would have taken care to have given us a ſure Foundation for it: for he doth not propoſe an End by inſufficient Means. If a licentious Liver be puniſhed with the loſs of his Eſtate; it may be a means of bringing him to Sobriety, whether he conſiders it as a Judgment from God, or as a common Accident: And in truth that God is the Author of the Evil we ſuffer; is, I believe, generally ſpeaking, one of the laſt Thoughts that is apt to ariſe in a Sinners Breaſt. That which puts the firſt ſtop to his Carriere is the weight of his Misfortunes, by which when his Heart begins to be mollified and ſubdued; 'tis then that he is in a fit Temper to look up to the Cauſe from whence they come. This may ſerve to ſhew, that being moved by thoſe worldly Inconveniencies which come from God, is not always an Act of *Faith*, and conſequently that the Objection comes thus far ſhort of the Argument. But I muſt obſerve, 2dly, That it is in truth nothing to the Purpoſe. For the Queſtion is not whether the being moved by the Judgments of God be an Act of *Faith*, or *not* an Act of *Faith*; but how they *Operate*. The End which God propoſes in afflicting us, is to bring us to Repentance. Well; How do Afflictions anſwer this End? Why plainly no otherwiſe than as they are a Bridle to our Paſſions. And thus *David* ſpeaks from his own Experience. *Before I was troubled* ſays he, *I went wrong*; *but now have I kept thy Word.* And why? It follows ſoon after *I thought on my ways, and I turned my Feet unto thy Teſtimonies.* This I ſay, is the Effect of the Inconveniencies of this World, they diſpoſe us to ſober Thought and ſerious Conſideration, which the hurry of our Paſſions whilſt they Reign without controul, will

will by no means allow. Either ſhew then that they can have no ſuch Effect when applyed by the Hand of the Magiſtrate; or no longer pretend that, when he does apply them, he makes uſe of a Means improper for the End of true Religion.

There are theſe Differences indeed to be obſerved between theſe two Caſes, *viz.* 1ſt, That when an Offender falls under the Penalties of Human Laws, he knows the worſt of it, which perhaps he may ſet at a lower Rate than the gratification of his Luſts. The Puniſhment may be either ſmall in itſelf, or being, as to its duration, confined to ſome determinate Period, may adminiſter Hopes which will ſerve to keep the Paſſions alive, and ſo prevent thoſe good Effects which would otherwiſe enſue. But to the Chaſtiſements of God, we can aſcertain neither Meaſure nor End; for *who knoweth the Power of his Wrath?* Who can tell how miſerable he may think fit to make wicked Men, even tho' we look no farther than the preſent State of Things? Again; 2dly, The Magiſtrate can judge only of the *outward Appearance*, but *God ſearcheth the Heart and Reins*; the one therefore muſt be ſatisfied with the mere forbearance of the *outward Act*, whilſt the other requires *inward Purity* and *Sincerity*. But theſe Differences will not go ſo far as to ſhow that the Application of Worldly Motives is proper in the Hand of God, and *not* ſo in the Hand of Man; but only that ſuch Motives when conſidered by the Sinner as made uſe of by God, will work an inward Reformation *more certainly*, than when they are applyed by the Civil Magiſtrate. He who looks upon himſelf as under the Chaſtiſement of God, and wiſhes for Deliverance, *muſt* bring himſelf to a

sincere Repentance, because nothing less will be sufficient: Whereas he who would avoid Civil Penalties; may be a Sinner in his Heart, if so be he takes care to avoid those Actions which the Law punishes. But it is to be considered that the mere forbearance of the outward Act, tho' in itself it is not true Virtue, is yet a very good step towards it; and that even the Judgments of God can operate no other way than by suppressing the outward Act upon those who discern not the Hand of his Providence, which (as I just now observed) is the Case of most Sinners, especially till they have made some Advances in the work of Reformation. The licentious Liver, who is punished with the loss of his Estate, whilst he considers it only as a common Accident, is wrought upon no otherwise than as hereby that *fewel* is withdrawn, which ministred to the inflaming his Lusts and Appetites. Now if this contributes any thing towards the begetting inward Purity; I can thus far see no Difference, whether it be done by the Hand of God or by the Hand of Man. How light some Men make of the mere forbearance of the outward Act I am not insensible. But when I consider how certain and necessary a Tendency the indulgence of one's self in wicked Practices has to corrupt the Mind, and bring on an habitual Disposition to Evil; I cannot but think that it would be the greatest Security in the World to Sobriety and good Manners; if there could be a Law, that just so much as a Man consumes in Luxury and Intemperance, just so much he should be obliged to pay yearly into the Publick Treasury.

I have instanced chiefly in the Case of Punishment because (as a very judicious (*h*) Writer

(*h*) Dean *Sherlock*, Considerations, p. 28.

has

has well obſerved) *the annexing poſitive* Rewards *to* good Actions *is a caſe which rarely happens, and the very attempt to do it would for the moſt part be ridiculous. The Magiſtrate encourages* Sobriety *by puniſhing* Drunkenneſs; Religion *and* Piety *by puniſhing* Irreligion *and* Profaneneſs; Obedience *to his Laws by puniſhing* Diſobedience. But yet, to conſider the Efficacy of *Rewards* will not be altogether improper, becauſe tho' it is not uſual for the Magiſtrate to *aſcertain* Rewards to good Actions by any *poſitive Law*; yet he very frequently does that which amounts to as much, *i. e.* he beſtows Poſts of *Honour* and *Profit* to ſome particular Subjects *ſo* or *ſo* qualified, with regard to Religion: This, I ſay, tho' it doth not ſtrictly come under the Notion of a *Reward* given for the Sake, and on the Account of ſuch Qualifications (it being only the aſſigning ſuch Poſts to thoſe Perſons who are ſuppoſed to be but qualified to fill them, and who upon other Accounts have deſerved well of their Country;) yet it will ordinarily have the ſame Effect, and therefore may be conſidered as ſuch. There is then this Difference berween Temporal Rewards when propounded by *God*, and when propounded by *Man*, *viz.* That in the former Caſe they have a *direct* Tendency to beget the love of God *i. e.* True Religion, which in the latter it muſt be confeſſed, they have *not*. For when *God* promiſes temporal good Things, to encourage us to Obedience; we are hereby led to conſider *Him* as our Benefactor, and are taught to love him becauſe he hath made it for our Intereſt to ſerve him. But when Temporal good Things are propounded by *Men*, as a Reward to Religion; we then conſider *Men* as our Friends, and we

many times think it enough to pleaſe them whom, by the mere Shadow of Religion, we can eaſily deceive, even tho' we do not pleaſe God, who is not to be impoſed upon by outward Appearances. But ſtil lthey have the ſame *remote*, *indirect* Tendency to promote true Religion, that Puniſhments have. For Men are no more willing to be *debar'd* of *preſent good* than they are to *endure preſent evil*; and therefore the one muſt be proper means, to reſtrain thoſe *Paſſions*, which would, if left to themſelves, lead us from our Duty, and to *awaken* our *Conſideration*, as well as the other.

From the *Practical* Duties of Religion which I have hitherto principally had in my View, let us now proceed to the *Speculative*; to which, it is eaſie to ſee, that the general Principles upon which I build may readily be applyed. For nothing is more plain from common Obſervation, than that the ſame depravity of Mind, which leads Men into *wicked Practices*, does alſo very frequently lead them into *erroneous Opinions*. This is more eſpecially true with regard to the Doctrines of Revealed Religion: the Evidence whereof (as I have obſerved at large upon (*i*) another Occaſion) not coming with the ſame degree of Force, wherewith *natural Truths* uſually preſent themſelves to the Mind (becauſe we ſee it thro' a great variety of *Mediums*) may eaſily be loſt where *Paſſion* and *Prejudice* intervene to obſtruct its Influence. To become a *Chriſtian*, there is no need that a Man ſhould be fooliſhly Credulous, becauſe there is enough in the Evidence upon which

(*i*) Operations of the Spirit, *Chap.* 3. §. 6. 7, 8.

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the Goſpel ſtands, to ſatisfy the Mind of any fair and reaſonable Inquirer. But then there is great need of a *meek* and a *tractable* Diſpoſition; ſince this Evidence will not force the Aſſent of thoſe who are not willing to learn. This then, I ſay, opens to us the way clearly to diſcern, how the applying the motives of this World on the ſide of the true Faith, will ſupport and increaſe the true Faith; to wit, as it is a means to take off the weight of thoſe *Prejudices*, which byaſs the Judgments and Underſtandings of Men, and to create both a willingneſs to learn and a readineſs to yield, when the proper means of Conviction are laid before them. That which prejudices Men againſt the Faith, is commonly ſome worldly Intereſt or other which preſents itſelf in Oppoſition to it: The proper Remedy therefore to this Evil (till there is Room for a better) will be to place *Truth* and *Intereſt* in the ſame View, which if it doth not end in Conviction (as for want of Abilities to judge ſometimes it may not) will yet have this certain good Effect, that Men will neither fooliſhly reject, nor wantonly depart from it. They will not ſo eaſily indulge Caprice, and Humour, nor lend a willing Ear to thoſe who preach new and ſtrange Doctrines: They will be rather apt to catch at very ſmall Advantages, than to neglect great and weighty Opportunities. I ſpeak this upon Suppoſition that the Methods made uſe of by the Publick for the Support and Encouragement of the true Faith, be of weight ſufficient to overballance all ſeparate Views: For if it be ſo (which ſometimes happens) that a greater Intereſt is to be ſerved by adhering to a *Party*, the Publick methods muſt ſo far looſe their Effect: For then in Truth the

Motives of this World will not lye *for* the true Religion but *againſt* it. But admitting this Exception, the Caſe will be as I have ſtated it; and who does not ſee that this is a very great Point gained in favour of the true Religion, who conſiders that *Prejudice* is the great Source of *Error*; and that there are very few who reject or depart from the Truth thro' the Fault of their *Underſtandings*, comparatively to the number of thoſe who are led aſide by the Prevalency of their *Fleſhly Appetites*.

I am well aware that this way of Reaſoning ſuppoſes Men to be under ſuch a general Senſe of Religion, as to think it to be their Duty to enquire ſeriouſly which, among the various Ways of Worſhip practiced in the World, is that of which God beſt approves; and conſequently that it cannot affect thoſe who are ſo abſolutely Careleſs, as to be ready to profeſs any that their Temporal Intereſt invites them to, without conſidering whether it be right or wrong. But then it is to be taken Notice, that the Caſe of this ſort of Men (whilſt they continue to be ſuch) will be the very ſame under every Method. The propoſal of Worldly Motives does not *make* them Careleſs, but finds them ſo: And as they do now profeſs the true Religion becauſe worldly Intereſt is on it's ſide; ſo if all Religions were a like in this Reſpect, they would profeſs none. The annexing therefore, the Motives of this World to the true Religion, if it does them no good, it does them at leaſt no harm: For if a Man be abſolutely unconcerned about God and Religion; his being a mere *outſide Profeſſor* cannot make him a *worſe* Man than he would be if he had made *no* Profeſſion of Religion at all. But his being a Profeſſor of

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the true Religion may be the Means of making him a *better*: for by being thus brought within the Verge of Inſtruction, he may thro' God's bleſſing be brought to a Senſe of his Duty, and come to Worſhip him (not as he doth now, for Faction and Intereſt ſake, but) with the Sincerity of an honeſt Mind. Caſes of this ſort have not unfrequently happened. Men who have come *to Church*, for inſtance, at firſt, perhaps, only to oblige their Friends, or to avoid the ſcandal of Irreligion or Singularity; being won over by the Preaching of the Word, have, in time, been heartily reconciled both to Religion and to our Communion. Now in ſuch a Caſe, it will not, I ſuppoſe, be pretended that a Man's Religion is ever the *worſe*; any more than it will be ſaid that a *Child* reads his Book the *worſe*, becauſe he was at firſt awed to it by the Rod, or bribed by a Toy.

The Reader now ſees by what way the Motives of this World when applyed on the ſide of true Religion, will advance the Intereſt of true Religion, both as to the *Opinions* and *Practices* of thoſe who are *directly* and *immediately* under the Influence of ſuch Motives. And the way in a few Words is this, That they miniſter to the Weakneſſes and Infirmities of Men, and ſerve as a Counterpoiſe, to thoſe Carnal or Worldly Motives on the other ſide, which would lead them from Truth or a good Conſcience. Thoſe who imagine (if any ſuch there are) that even this Influence of Worldly Motives, deſtroys all Religion, are Caſuiſts who underſtand neither themſelves nor the Reaſon of Things. I am very free to allow that what is done merely upon a worldly View, (*i. e.* without any inward Senſe of Duty) has nothing at all of Religion in it; But

if by the application of Worldly Motives, Men are brought to so much Consideration as to see the Reasonableness of what they do, they shall be thought, I hope, to do a *reasonable Service.* For in this Case the Motives of this World are not the *immediate Principle* of Action, but the *remote Occasion* of it: They are to be considered not as the *proper Cause*, but as the *Means* under which the proper Cause Operates; which, it is plain, cannot so far influence the *Effect* as to alter the *Nature* of it. A Man indeed would be so much the more *perfect*, if he were so far out of the reach of Temptation as to want no support from the Motives of this World; but we must have a care how we make the being intirely out of the reach of Temptation *essential* to true Religion. I know many an honest Man that goes to Church constantly; says his Prayers with great Devotion; lives unblamably; and is firmly persuaded that he serves God in the way that he has appointed: And yet I will not venture to say of such a one, that the Prospect of a good Estate, for instance, would not be able to warp his Judgment, or cause him to act even against his Persuasion. What then? Shall we condemn him for this Reason? Is his Religion to be set aside as good for nothing, because under these Circumstances he would assuredly transgress? If you say it is; then, by the way, pray take this along with you, that the proposal of Temporal Motives can do no such hurt to Religion as has been pretended. The hurt it does is said to be this, *viz.* That it is a Temptation to Men to act against their Consciences, which, how far it is an Objection, shall be considered in another Place. But upon the present Supposition it can be no Objection. For if he who

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would Sin if a Temptation *were* offered, is void of Religion as well as he who actually *does* Sin when a Temptation *is* offered; it is manifeſt that the State of Religion can, in this Reſpect, receive no manner of Alteration, whether worldly Motives be propoſed or not. But God forbid that we ſhould make him ſo hard and ſevere a Maſter. That we muſt be willing to part with *all* when he calls us to it, I want not to be told: nor therefore do I doubt but when a Man actually Sacrifices his Conſcience to his Intereſt, he is in a damnable State. But if Men do *well* in the Station they are in, I do not think that they ſhall be rejected becauſe under *another* Station they *would have done ill*; and that for this Reaſon among many others, *viz.* Becauſe it is one Inſtance of the Mercy and Goodneſs of that God, who *ſuffers us not to be tempted above what we are able*, that he accomodates the Conditions of Men to their reſpective Tempers and Capacities, and many Times ſecures his faithful Servants from the Aſſaults of thoſe Temptations under which he foreſees they would be apt to Miſcarry. It muſt be allowed then that Religion, and a Diſpoſition to be overcome by ſuch or ſuch Temptations are conſiſtent Things; and that the Magiſtrate does but imitate the Example of God himſelf, when by a lawful and prudent Uſe of the Motives of this World, he removes thoſe *Stumbling Blocks* out of the Way, which to *weak* and unſtable Men may be *the Occaſion of falling*.

I thought it needful to ſay thus much, that I might the more effectually reconcile that Influence which I aſcribe to Worldly Motives with the Notion of Religion. I might add, that as every degree of Proficiency is a ſtep to greater Improvements; 'tis to be hoped, and may reaſonably

sonably be expected, that this Imperfect State may by Degrees advance and grow up into a more perfect one, by the constant and regular Use of those Means, of which Multitudes perhaps would have been deprived, had they without any Support or Encouragement from without, been every one of them left to bear the weight of his own Infirmities. If a *Nurse* makes use of *leading Strings*, 'tis not because she proposes that the *Child* should never *go alone*, but in order to bring him to it. 'Tis the same thing as to Temporal Motives with regard to Religion. They are seasonable and proper Helps in our *Infant* Estate, in which it is not supposed that we should always continue. No; Our business is to *go on from Strength to Strength*; from lesser degrees of Proficiency to greater: and 'tis our own Faults if under those Means which the true Religion always affords, we do not arrive to such a State of Maturity, that what was at first done under the shelter of the Motives of this World, may be done at last *without*, or even *against* the Motives of this World.

I have now set the Argument in as clear a Light as I am able: And if it concludes what it is brought to prove, our Adversaries have lost one of their main Supports. But if it doth not; surely it is not so very weak and impertinent, but that it might have challenged the Consideration of those who have of late written so largely upon this Subject. Nevertheless I do not find that it has been so much as once hinted at. Mr. *Locke* and Mr. *Bayle* have indeed both taken Notice of it. But with the one (as he has managed the Matter) I have nothing to do; and the other has treated the Objection with more Contempt than became him, unless he had known

better

better how to remove it. What Advantages Mr. *Locke's* Adverſary may have given him in his particular way of reaſoning upon the Caſe I know not, having never ſeen his Books. But this I cannot help obſerving even from Mr. *Locke's* own Letters, that great Men do not always argue like themſelves. The main of what he hath ſaid is, (*k*) 1. That you cannot infer the *Lawfulneſs* of Temporal Motives merely from their *Uſefulneſs*; which is true. And if his Adverſary inferred any ſuch Thing, he argued weakly. But the Point with me is, whether in order to the begetting true Religion, Temporal Motives are (when applied on the ſide of true Religion) *uſeful* or *not uſeful*; and Mr. *Locke* is ſo far from denying, that he confeſſes that they are. Hear him if you pleaſe in his own Words. *You ſay that* Force *indirectly and at a diſtance may do ſome Service.* I GRANT *it*: *Make your beſt of it. What do you conclude.*——— I care not what he concludes, nor what any one elſe concludes. Thus much is plain, that, if *that* be true of *worldly Motives* in general, which Mr. *Locke* grants concerning *Force*, (and certainly it is a great deal truer;) to ſay that worldly Motives *cannot be uſeful* to the ends of Religion, is a Refinement upon the Queſtion, which HE never once thought of. 2. He quarrels much with his Adverſary for pretending that Diſſenters from the National Religion, are puniſhed only *to make them conſider*, and ſays that in Fact the Caſe is otherwiſe. That Diſſenters are puniſhed *becauſe they are Diſſenters*; and that it

(*k*) See 2d. Letter for Toleration, p. 7. & ſeq. and 3d. Letter, Chap. 6.

would

would be absurd to punish any Man only *to make him consider*, because all have not Opportunity to consider; All have not Abilities; Some may have consider'd already; No-body can ascertain what Degree of Consideration is necessary, nor know when Men have considered, or when they have not considered; and for divers others such like Reasons. But all this is nothing at all to me. For none of these Exceptions have any Tendency to shew, (what indeed can never be shewn) that if *Dissenters* are laid under *outward Inconveniencies*, this will not be a Means to make them *consider* what they do before they separate; which is the only Point that, at present, I am concerned with.

Mr. *Bayle* falls more directly into the Point, and says, (*l*) *That the filling Men with the Fears of Temporal Punishments, and with the Hopes of Temporal Advantages, is putting them in a very ill State for discerning the true Reasons of Things, from the false.* But who sees not that this Answer, instead of removing, confirms, the Objection? What Mr. *Bayle* would have, and what he has taken a great deal of needless Pains to prove, is this; That in considering the Nature of Things, the Mind will be apt to determine itself to that side which is attended with Temporal Advantages. Very good; And is it not then a very just Inference from hence, that if Temporal Advantage attends upon true Religion, Men will most naturally be led to embrace the true Religion? Whether 'tis *right* to apply the Motives of this World to support true

(*l*) Remarks upon St. *Austin*, Numb. 6. But the Reader may see it more at large, Philos. Comm. Par. 2. Chap. 1.

Religion,

Religion, is a Queſtion which ſhall be conſidered in due Time: But if it be *wrong*, this has no Tendency to ſhew that true Religion *cannot* be ſupported by the Motives of this World; or that the Motives of this World, may not be the *remote Inſtrument* of begetting an *inward Principle*. This is the Point which Mr. *Bayle* ought to have proved: But inſtead of this, he, in effect gives it up; by not only allowing, but contending for that very Suppoſition, upon which my Reaſoning to prove the contrary entirely depends. As little to the Purpoſe is what he ſays to that Inſtance by which I have endeavour'd to illuſtrate this Matter; to wit, a *Fathers* applying Temporal Motives in the management of his Child. *Pergis pugnantia ſecum, Frontibus adverſis componere*, ſays he to St. *Auſtin*, who had made Uſe of the ſame Illuſtration. His meaning is that what is proper in the Management of *Children*, is not ſo in the Management of *Men*. But why ſo? Why thus it follows. (*m*) *Children being unable to form any deliberate or reaſonable Judgment upon their own Actions, but obeying the Impreſſions of the Machine, and thoſe Senſations of Pleaſure or Pain which Objects produce in them: What we are principally to require at their Hands, is the Practice of certain Actions. But as they are very little ſenſible of any Motive of Honour, and cannot ſee far enough into the depth of a Reaſon to give it the Preference to their Paſſions, they muſt be threatned, and ſometimes whipt, before they can be brought to perform theſe Actions.* Inſtead of which, Mr. *Bayle* might have ſaid (for it amounts to no more) that if a Boy will not

(*m*) Remarks ut ſupra Numb. 27.

do

do as he is bidden, he muſt be chaſtiſed. Well; ſo far I think we are agreed. But what *End* do you propoſe by chaſtiſing him? Is it *merely* to regulate the *outward Act*, or to reform the *inward Diſpoſition* alſo? Why you ſhall hear. *It anſwers* (ſays he) *our End ſufficiently if they only perform theſe outward Actions, tho' we ſhould not juſt then enlighten their Underſtandings, nor endue them with any juſt Notions of Things.* This is pleaſant: Not *juſt then* enlighten! Why how ſhould you *juſt then* enlighten, when *juſt then* they are ſuppoſed not capable of being enlightened? But is your End ſufficiently anſwered if they ſhould *never* be enlightened *afterward?* This cautious way of ſpeaking would give us hopes that the Queſtion muſt be anſwered in the *Negative*; and then I have the Thing I want. But the Inſtance which follows leads us to the *Affirmative* ſide; for thus he proceeds to illuſtrate the Matter. *A Father has a mind his Son ſhould learn to* Write; *orders him to* write *ſo many Hours a Day; and whips him if he does not* write. From which he obſerves, that *the* Father *gains his Point if the* Child *only practices Writing, and for fear of Whipping, endeavours to write a fair Hand.* Impertinent! He that teaches his Child to *Write*, to *Fiddle*, or to *Dance*, (for all theſe Inſtances are alike proper) teaches an Art which *conſiſts* in *outward Actions:* His End therefore is ſufficiently anſwered, if by the fear of the Rod he is brought to *perform* theſe *outward Actions.* But ſuppoſe a Man has a mind to teach his Child the *Catechiſm*; ſuppoſe he tells him that he muſt not *Lye*, nor *Swear*, nor *Cheat*, nor *Blaſpheme*, &c. and whips him when he offends. What, in the name of common Senſe does he mean by this? Does he treat him as a mere Machine, or as a reaſon-

reaſonable Creature? Does he propoſe no more than he propoſes by whipping his *Horſe* or his *Dog*; i. e. only that he may exhibit orderly, certain *outward Motions*; or does he hope hereby to make him a *good Man*? The Truth is evidently this. That what the Father *directly* and *immediately* propoſes is no more than the regulating the *outward Behaviour*. It is that his Child ſhould be able to repeat his *Catechiſm*; that he ſhould forbear the Acts of *Lying*, *Swearing*, *Cheating*, *Blaſpheming*, &c. But then if he underſtands himſelf; he propoſes alſo that the outward Behaviour being thus conſtantly kept in Order; *Reaſon* may have liberty, gradually to operate, and produce thoſe *inward* good Effects of *Knowledge* and *Virtue*, which otherwiſe (*i. e.* if the Paſſions had been ſuffer'd to work as they liſted) you might have expected in vain. It was not for nothing then, you ſee, that Mr. *Bayle*, overlooking this obvious and pertinent Inſtance; ſtept aſide to fetch in another quite foreign to the Matter in Hand. For the Caſe being thus determined, the Queſtion ſtill returns (which it ſeems he had no mind to anſwer) *viz.* Why if *outward Reſtraint* may produce an *inward Principle* in *Children*; it may not alſo effect the ſame in *Men*; when the *reaſon* which makes the Means proper in one Caſe, is common to the other? But when Mr. *Bayle* had told us, that no more is propoſed by beating of a *Child*, than regulating the *outward Action*; it was no wonder that he ſhould ſay the ſame of a *Maſters* beating his *Servant*; nor that he ſhould make Uſe of as improper an Inſtance to illuſtrate this latter Caſe, as he had produced to illuſtrate the former. *Let a* Cook ſays he, *perſuade himſelf as much as he pleaſes, that his* Maſter *is not fit to live, and that he deſerves*

ſerves to have his Dinner ſpoild; yet if the Dread of a Horſe-whip *hinders his dreſſing it ill, is not this all his* Maſter *aims at?* Yes *Sir*, if he minds nothing elſe but his Belly. But if he be not an *Epicurean* throughout; he will as ſoon chaſtiſe his *Cook* for *blaſpheming* his *God*, as for ſpoiling his *Sawce*; and he may mend his Manners too, by ſo doing, for any thing that Mr. *Bayle* has to ſay to the contrary. As to what Mr *Bayle* hath ſaid concerning the Efficacy of Worldly Motives in the Hand of *God*, it is only this, *viz.* That (*n*) God *who is the firſt Mover as well as Searcher of Hearts, may make his* Chaſtiſements *avail to the inward Converſion of the Party; but he has no where promiſed a Bleſſing to our Perſecutions of* Hereticks, *nor the Influences of his Grace upon them*. But now, as there is Reaſon enough to believe that he himſelf thought this to be a mere Evaſion; ſo, it is (ſo far as I am at preſent concerned) ſo manifeſtly nothing to the Purpoſe, that I ſhall not ſtay to anſwer it. Nor indeed had I ſpent ſo much Time in anſwering his Objections againſt the main Argument; if I had not found my ſelf, as it were, *bully'd* into it by a (*o*) *Promiſe* before hand that it ſhould *ſo fully be confuted; that for the future it ſhould be made over to the Under-ſpur-leathers, thoſe* Miſſionaries *of the* Village *who never bluſh to produce the ſame Objections over and over, without taking the leaſt Notice of the Anſwers which have ruined them to all Intents and Purpoſes.* This is a good home Challenge; and I thought it behoved me not to overlook what Mr. *Bayle ſeemed* at leaſt to lay ſuch a

(*n*) Ibid. Numb. 8.

(*o*) Philoſ. Com. Par. 1. Chap. 2.

mighty

mighty Streſs upon. But the Reader I hope, is by this time ſatisfied that great Words are not always a ſign of good Arguments.

Parturiunt Montes naſcitur ridiculus Mus.

And now I have done with the Argument ſo far as it relates to thoſe who are *directly* and *immediately* under the Influence of worldly Motives. Give me leave now a little more fully to enlarge upon the Effects which the Application of them will have more *remotely* upon others. Now theſe Effects are not confined to a few, but reach to the whole Commonwealth in general; the *Cuſtoms* and *Manners* in which are as naturally and regularly determined by ſuch Motives, as any Effect is determined by its Cauſe. And this is that which makes this Conſideration, how much ſoever neglected by our modern Writers, to be of the greateſt Conſequence. For the number of thoſe who can propoſe to themſelves Places of *Honour* and *Profit*, no where bear any Proportion to the whole Community. Admit then that ſuch Motives can have no good Effect upon the former; it will ſtill be true that the Ends of Religion will be ſerved by them, if by *their* Means a good Proviſion will be made for the latter. Now to ſhow you how naturally this Effect will follow; Let it be *ſuppoſed* only, that the Religion which is taught and profeſſed in the Church of *England* is the true Religion; Let us imagine it to be *now firſt* eſtabliſhed by Law, and ſo hedged about with Temporal Privileges, that if a Separation from it were not attended with poſitive Penalties, there ſhould at leaſt be no proſpect of riſing to any thing conſiderable in the way of Civil Promotion but under the Profeſſion of it: What now will be the natural Conſequence of this? Why in the firſt

place, the great and leading Men of the Nation will all of them be profeſſed Members of the Church of *England*; the Doctrines of the Church of *England* will be taught in our Churches, Univerſities, and publick Schools; and it's Way of Worſhip will for the moſt part prevail. Now to pleaſure our Adverſaries, I am willing that upon this firſt Change, they ſhould ſuppoſe as many outſide Profeſſors as they can have the Conſcience to ſuppoſe. Be it ſo, that many do profeſs it with a View to worldly Intereſt; more to comply with Cuſtom and Faſhion; and ſome few out of Principle. Yet I will not ſuppoſe Truth to be ſo barren a Thing, that it will not grow and daily increaſe by being duly *planted* and *watered*. I ſhould rather ſay in our Saviour's Language, that it is *like a grain of Muſtard-Seed, which when it is ſown, is indeed the leaſt of all Seeds; but when it groweth up, it becometh a great Tree, ſo that the Fowls of the Air lodge in the Branches thereof.* Now if you conſider it, here is an effectual Proviſion made both for *Planting* and *Watering*. For as to *Planting*, not to mention the Effect which the conſtant and regular Preaching of God's Word will probably have even upon theſe firſt Profeſſors themſelves; Not to mention this, I ſay, 'tis plain that thoſe ſame Reaſons which prevail upon *them*, to conform to the eſtabliſhed Religion, will cauſe them to Educate their *Children* in the ſame way; and our *Schools* and *Univerſities* will be as plentifully ſtored with the *Children* and *Youth* of the Country, as our *Poſts of Honour* are filled with thoſe of a more advanced Age. It matters not how this happens: For does any one think that becauſe the *Father* in conforming propoſes only to make himſelf *great*; therefore the *Child* is placed out of the

the reach of every Thing that is *good*? What if ſomebody to gratify his Avarice or Ambition accepts of a Poſt which he cannot poſſibly execute conſiſtently with his Principles, *i. e.* againſt his Conſcience? I hope for all this his *Son* may learn his *Church-Catechiſm* with as much *Sincerity* as you can wiſh. And certainly whatever in ſuch a Caſe be the Motive which influences the *Parent*; this cannot hinder the good Effect of Inſtruction upon his *Children*: Nor will that Religion which in Virtue of this Inſtruction they ſhall hereafter follow with a *good* Conſcience, be at all the worſe becauſe the *Parent* both in following it *himſelf*, and in having *them* taught to follow it, acted with a *bad* one. I do not ſay that this Effect will *always* follow: For ſome perhaps may have ſo little Religion themſelves, as to take Pains that their *Children* may have as little: And it is poſſible for a Man after his *Child* hath been well diſciplined in the Doctrines of the Church of *England*, by ſome new Art or other, to undo every Thing that has been done before. But theſe are Caſes which rarely happen, and which never can happen but when Men find ſo much pleaſure in an Evil Conſcience, as to be willing to leave it as a Legacy to their Children; or have their Eye upon ſome growing Party which they think will be conſiderable enough to alter the Eſtabliſhment, and model the Conſtitution after their own Minds. But generally ſpeaking, I ſay, the Conſequence will be as I have repreſented it. For what general Reaſon can be aſſigned, why a Man ſhould not bring up his *Child* in that way which he chuſes to follow *himſelf*? Is it not Natural to us all to deſire the ſame Advantages for our *Children* which we deſire for *ourſelves*?

Thus then will the ſeed be *ſown*, which being gradually *watered* by the preaching of Gods Word in the Places of his Publick worſhip, will grow up into a plentiful Harveſt both to the preſent and to future Generations.

This Effect will be ſo much the more certain and univerſal in Proportion, as the Number of thoſe who profeſs the National Religion upon a principle of Conviction, is greater: Which tho' for Argument ſake it was ſuppoſed to be the leaſt; will yet in Fact, where Truth is encouraged, be always the moſt conſiderable, becauſe Truth muſt always be viſible to thoſe who have Unſtanding to diſcern it, where there is no unreaſonable Byaſs to obſtruct its Influence. So that from hence and from all that has been offer'd upon this Head, I beg leave to infer, that it is *poſſible* for the Magiſtrate by the Methods of Civil Adminiſtration to advance the Intereſt of true Religion: A Point which I ſhould have been aſhamed to have dwelt ſo long upon, had I not thought it neceſſary towards the Conviction of thoſe, who have accuſtomed themſelves ſo much to *refining*, as to grow unacquainted with the moſt plain and obvious Things. There had certainly been no need of this arguing *a priori*, if our Adverſaries would only have given themſelves the Trouble of opening their Eyes, and of obſerving what every Day paſſes in the World: I ſhould rather have ſaid, if they would have been ſo juſt as, to have made a proper Uſe of what thay *do* obſerve. For who ſo forward as they to complain of the Miſchief that worldly Motives do, when they are made Uſe of to ſupport a *falſe* Religion? And what I beſeech them is the Miſchief they complain of? Are they afraid that Men are made *Hypocrites*, mere

outſide

outside Professors? This is the Case of many without question: But it were a barbarous sort of Civility to complement the *good Sense* of whole Nations, or indeed the *major* part of any Nation, at the Expence of their *Honesty*. The common People in *France*, *Spain*, and many other Countrys profess *Popery* (as we have all the Reason in the world to believe) with as much *Integrity*, *i. e.* under as firm a Persuation of its *Truth*, as the common People of *England* profess *Protestantism*. How I pray happens this? Is it not from hence, that the Motives of this World are made use of to support and encourage *Popery*? Again; *Popery* heretofore prevailed in *England* as universally as *Protestantism* does now. Whence this Difference? Is it not hence, that whereas the Motives of this World were heretofore employed *on the side* of *Popery*, they are now turned *against Popery*? If not, why are we afraid of Popish *Kings*, Popish *Laws*, a Popish *Government*? Why I say do we fear and so cautiously guard against this great Evil; if we do not believe, that upon such a Change, *Protestantism* would in a while be rooted out, and *Popery* be restor'd to its ancient Possessions? Judge now if this be not an Evidence to the eye sight of the World, that Temporal Motives may be the Instrument of begetting an *inward Principle*; and that whatever the Religion be in favour whereof these Motives are *adequately* applyed; that Religion will most assuredly prevail. And what is the Reason of this? Why, if it needs to be repeated, it is, partly because the Motives of this World do byas the Judgments and Understandings of Men; but principally, because the general Course of *Instruction* and *Education* in every Commonwealth does constantly and

unavoidably follow them. There is no one ſo inconſiderate as not to obſerve, that the Principles which we hold in our Manhood, are generally ſpeaking either the ſame with, or an Improvement upon, thoſe which we have imbibed in our younger Years; and how hard a Thing it is to lay aſide thoſe Notions which long Uſe and Cuſtom has rendered familiar to us: that few Men being formed for Study and *Speculation*, Religion is, in moſt not ſo much the reſult of their own Induſtry in comparing and judging, as of the happy or unhappy Care of thoſe who have had the firſt framing of their Minds, and laid the firſt Rudiments of Knowledge. Theſe I ſay are common Obſervations. Now if the Effect of worldly Motives be ſuch when applyed in favour of a *falſe* Religion; how much more forcibly will they operate when they are made uſe of to encourage the *true*; when the Power of *Cuſtom* and *Prepoſſeſſion* ſhall conſpire together with that of *natural Light*, as well to perſuade, as to keep Men firm, and ſtedfaſt in their Perſuaſions?

How far the Effect of worldly Motives when applyed to ſupport a *falſe* Religion, is an Argument againſt applying them to encourage the *true*, is a Point which I ſhall fully conſider in another Place. My preſent Buſineſs was only to ſhew that it is *poſſible* in the *Nature* of the Thing, for the Magiſtrate by the Methods of Civil Adminiſtration to ſerve the Intereſt of true Religion; or that the Application of worldly Motives is not an *improper Means* of begetting true Religion. And tho' I think I have made good this Point beyond all reaſonable ground of Exception; yet I will beg leave juſt to mention one Conſideration more, and that is the Example

ample of God himſelf in his Dealings with the *Jews*, whoſe Law was enforced with Temporal Sanctions. For how irrational ſoever it may be thought to argue from what *was* done under the *Moſaic* Law, to what *may* and *ought* to be done under the *Chriſtian Diſpenſation*; the Caſe will certainly go ſo far as to ſhew that Religion *may be promoted* by Temporal Methods, unleſs any one be ſo wicked as to believe that God makes uſe of *improper Means*, or ſo abſurd as to imagine, that the End which God propoſed was only to bring his People to the Practice of a more *external* Worſhip, and not to ſecure that *inward Reverence* which was due to his Perſon and Authority. And indeed unleſs it be true that Religion is, in the *Nature* of it, *capable* of being promoted by Temporal Methods, I ſee not with what Senſe it is that we pray (as our Liturgy teaches us) that the Civil Magiſtrate and thoſe who are **in Authority under him, may adminiſter Juſtice to the Maintenance of true Religion and Virtue.** But our Adverſaries have attempted (and what is it that they will not attempt) to reconcile this Prayer to their Notions! They (*p*) are FULLY SATISFYED (it ſeems) *that to* **miniſter Juſtice to the Puniſhment of Wickedneſs and Vice, and to the Maintenance of true Religion and Virtue,** CAN *mean nothing but to execute their Office ſo, as to puniſh the* OUTWARD ACTS *of Wickedneſs and Vice, and to encourage the* OUTWARD ACTS *of Righteouſneſs and Virtue.* ——— *Or if any think* ——— *that the* **Maintenance of true Religion,** *ſignifies*

(*p*) Anſwer to the Repreſentation, p. 172. 173.

fies the Support, Eſtabliſhment, and Defence, of any particular Profeſſion or Order of Worſhip — this goes no farther than EXTERNAL PROFESSION, *and the* EXTERNAL BEHAVIOUR, *and* SOUNDS *uſed in Publick Worſhip.* But whence this mighty *Satisfaction* I wonder, that *true Religion* and *Virtue* CAN ſignifie nothing more than *outward Acts, outward Behaviour, outward Sounds?* Is *Religion* a mere *outward Act?* Why no; but *it happens here to be called* ſo. It *happens!* As if our Reformers compiled the Liturgy with ſo much haſt that it was pure Chance whether they ſpoke Senſe or not! But how, I ask, are they aſſured of this? Why, 1. True Religion *is here oppoſed to* Wickedneſs *in Practice, as* Virtue *is to* Vice — *and the* outward Actions *of Men, as they affect human Society, are the Object of his* (the Magiſtrates) *care and concern.* This reaſoning is ſomewhat Dark: But either I cannot underſtand it, or it concludes thus. That which the Magiſtrate *puniſheth,* is the *outward Act* of Wickedneſs only; therefore that which we pray that he may *maintain,* is the *outward Act* of Religion only: Which Concluſion lying about as far diſtant from the Premiſes as *Eaſt* is from *Weſt,* I muſt leave theſe Reaſoners themſelves to find out the Connection. The Reaſon why the Magiſtrate puniſheth only the outward Act of Wickedneſs is obvious enough, and ſhall be conſidered afterwards. But be it what it will, ſurely there is Senſe enough in praying that the Magiſtrate may be diligent in puniſhing all Acts of Wickedneſs on the one hand; and in maintaining (not merely the *outward Profeſſion* of Religion, but) true eſſential Religion on the other, if it be in his *Power* to maintain it. O! but this is what the Magiſtrate *cannot do*; and they argue, 2. That therefore

we are not here taught to pray that he *may* do it. *The* Magiſtrate —— *can reach with all his Power no farther than* outward Practice; —— He *cannot reach to the* Hearts *or* Thoughts *of Men, ſo as to make them truly worſhip God, or truly Religious; ſo that this ſuppoſes* external Behaviour *to be here called* true Religion. But who told them, I would deſire to know, that the Magiſtrate with all his Power can reach no farther than *outward Practice*; or that he cannot make (*i. e.* that he cannot be the Inſtrument of making) Men *truly* Religious? Why No-body; But they *think ſo*, It is *their* Opinion, THEY *have often remarked it.* But under Favour 'tis not *their* Opinion, nor *our* Opinion, nor *any bodies* Opinion, but the Opinion of thoſe who compiled the Liturgy; that is to be conſidered in the Caſe. If they can very plainly prove that *they* have any where taught this Doctrine; this indeed will be a good Rule whereby to interpret the Words of the Prayer: But if not they *themſelves* may remark it as *their own* Opinion as often as they pleaſe; The Matter will ſtill reſt where it is, and the Argument end in the ſame Place where it begun. What I ſay is, that if the Magiſtrate *cannot* maintain true Religion, there is no Senſe in theſe Words of our Liturgy, which teach us to pray that he *may* do it. Their Anſwer is, That in theſe Words we *cannot* be taught to pray that the Magiſtrate *may* maintain *true Religion*, but only that he may maintain the *outward Profeſſion* of true Religion. And why? Why becauſe the Magiſtrate *cannot maintain true Religion.* Is not this ſpecial Reaſoning! —— But to ſettle this Point in a few Words. The Compilers of our Liturgy have no where delivered it as *their* Opinion, that the Magiſtrate *cannot* promote

true

true Religion: They suppose the direct contrary in this very Prayer, which is so far from enforcing, that it will not *admit* of that Sense which our Adversaries are willing to put upon it. The word *Religion* is, I own, in common Speech, often used to signify no more than the *outward Profession*: But that Religion consider'd *as* an *outward Profession* (i. e. abstracted from *internal Purity*) should be a proper Subject of a Christians Prayer, is a Notion as new as it is absurd. Or if our Adversaries do not think themselves singular, in praying for the mere *Shadow* and *Form* of Godliness; let them if they are able, justify themselves from *one* plain Passage at least, either in our *Publick* Prayers, or in any approved Form of *Private* Devotion. Besides, if they could wrest the word *Religion* to this Sense, this would not help them. For we pray here that the Magistrate may maintain not only *true Religion*, but *Virtue*. And elsewhere, that he may **preserve the People committed to his Charge in Wealth, Peace, and Godliness**, and that **Religion and Piety may be established amongst us**; which Words *Virtue*, *Godliness*, and *Piety*; do *never*, even in the Mouth of the Vulgar, signify the mere *outward Behaviour*. And thus much shall suffice, to have been spoken concerning the first Question.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Magiſtrates Right to encourage true Religion; wherein is ſhewn, firſt, *How this Right ſtands by, and under, the Law of Nature.*

IT being ſhown that it is (in the Nature of the Thing) *poſſible* for the Magiſtrate by the exerciſe of Civil Authority, to promote the Intereſt of God's true Religion, and by what Methods; we come now to the main Point, which is to enquire what *Right* he has to do it. Which Queſtion as it is in itſelf evidently diſtinct from the foregoing; ſo it bears no ſuch relation to it, as that the one muſt neceſſarily be determined by the other. If the Magiſtrate has a *Right* to encourage true Religion, this indeed ſuppoſes it *poſſible* for him to encourage it, as has afore been obſerved: But on the other Hand, when you have proved it *poſſible* for the Magiſtrate to encourage true Religion; ſomething more is required to ſhew that it is *Lawful* for him to do it; for you cannot infer a *Right* from a mere *Poſſibility.*

Two Things then I conceive will readily be underſtood when we ſpeak of the Magiſtrates *Right* to encourage true Religion, *viz.* 1. That we ſpeak of the *Perſon* or *Perſons* in whoſe Hands the *ſupreme* Power in any Commonwealth is lodged; And, 2. That we ſpeak of the Magiſtrate conſider'd *as ſuch*, i. e. conſider'd as acting in his *Publick Capacity.* That the Magiſtrate in his *Private* Capacity may encourage true Religion, and that he ought to do ſo, no one diſputes: For he is then conſider'd not under the Notion of a *Magiſtrate*, but under the Notion of a *Man*; and

and conſequently muſt have the ſame Right that all other Men have. But what a Man has a Right to do as a *Private Perſon*, he may have no Right to do as a *Publick Miniſter*: And therefore I have expreſsly added theſe Words *by the Methods of Civil Adminiſtration*, to denote that the enquiry is concerning what the Magiſtrate has a Right to do *ex Officio*, or in Virtue of his being the *Head* of the Body Politick. To determine this Point therefore it will be neceſſary in the firſt Place, to take a general View of the Magiſtrates Office; and to conſider whether the care of Religion does at all belong to it or not. For if it does *not*; all Methods which, as Magiſtrate, he can make Uſe of for the encouragement of Religion, will be an abuſe of his Truſt, and conſequently alike Unlawful. But if it *does*; thoſe Methods which have been aſſigned above as proper in themſelves, may be Lawful alſo, and muſt be ſo unleſs ſome ſpecial Reaſon intervenes. I ſhall therefore make it my Buſineſs to ſhew, That the Care of Religion *does* belong to the Magiſtrates Office. But in doing this, the Nature of the Subject will not admit that I confine my ſelf ſo ſtrictly to the general Point, as not ſometimes to mention ſome of thoſe Particulars, in which the Care of Religion does conſiſt. I ſhall however be as ſparing as I can, reſerving the more diſtinct Diſcuſſion of thoſe Particulars till afterwards.

That we may proceed clearly then, it will be very proper to trace the Matter up to the Beginning, and ſhew how the Caſe ſtands, under, and according to, the *Law* of *Nature*. For certain it is, that what Right the Magiſtrate always had by the *Law* of *Nature*, that Right and no other he has ſtill under the *Goſpel*; unleſs the

Goſpel

Goſpel hath made any Difference; which whether it hath, or hath not, ſhall be conſider'd in it's proper Place. Let us conſider then, what true Religion under the Law of Nature is: And this can be neither more nor leſs than *moral Virtue*, i. e. a Behaviour towards God and Man, ſuitable to the Dictates of right Reaſon, reſulting from the Belief of a *Providence*, i. e. of a God who made and governs the World; who is the *Rewarder* of them that do well, and the *Puniſher* of them that do Evil. I mention *Rewards* and *Puniſhments*, not as if the being influenced by the expectation of them were Eſſential to the Notion of Natural Religion (for this is a Queſtion with which there is at preſent no Occaſion for me to concern my ſelf,) but I ſpeak of them as the great Motives, without which Religion cannot *in Fact* be ſupported, and which the Notion of a Deity naturally leads us to expect. It is impoſſible for us to think of a juſt and a wiſe Governour of the World, without ſuppoſing that he will ſome way or other vindicate the Honour of his Laws, and make a proper Diſtinction between thoſe who reverence, and thoſe who ſet at nought his Authority: And accordingly we may obſerve that even thoſe Heathens who had little or no Notion of a *future* State, did yet conſider the Gods whom they adored under the Notion of *Rewarders* and *Avengers*; which gave Riſe to thoſe numberleſs Superſtitions, which conſtituted the external Worſhip of the *Gentile* World. But whatever Vanities Superſtition and a falſe Notion of the Deity might introduce; *true* Religion under the Law of Nature will be nothing elſe than *moral Virtue*, and of this I would always be underſtood when I ſpeak of the Magiſtrates Right to encourage true Religion under the Law of Nature.

To

To know therefore whether the Care of Religion belongs to the Magiſtrate by the Law of Nature; we muſt conſider the *End* of the Magiſtrates Office, which all Men acknowledge to be the ſecurity of the *Civil Intereſts*, i. e. the *Lives*, *Liberties*, and *Poſſeſſions* of the Subject; all which may be comprehended in one Word, the *publick Civil Good*. Whether this be the *only* End of the Magiſtrates Office, ſhall be conſider'd by and by: That this is *one* End of it, is confeſſed on all Hands, and in conſequence of this Principle it has been allowed that (*q*) *whatever directly affects the Happineſs of Publick Societies, is within the Magiſtrates Care.* I make no reckoning here of the Word *directly*, becauſe our Adverſaries by ſometimes uſing, and ſometimes omitting it, have ſhewn that they make no Account of it themſelves; and becauſe in Reaſon it is plain, that if it be the Buſineſs of the Magiſtrate to take care of the publick Civil Good, he muſt have to do with every Thing in which the publick Civil Good is *any* way concerned, *i. e.* whether it affects it *directly* or *indirectly*. The Queſtion therefore is, whether the publick Civil Good be any way concerned in the Religion of the Subject: And this it evidently is, upon theſe two Accounts, *viz.* 1. As the publick Civil Good is concerned in the *Behaviour* of the Subject, upon which Religion, or the want of it, muſt always have a very ſenſible Influence; And, 2. As the publick Civil Good is concerned in the *Pleaſure* or *Diſpleaſure* of *Almighty God*, who bleſſeth thoſe that pay a due Reverence to his Name, and frequently puniſheth whole Nations *for the wicked-*

(*q*) Anſw. to the Repreſ. p. 160.

neſs

neſs of them that dwell therein. As to the firſt of theſe two Points, it is ſo clear and evident by it's own Light, that it hath been obſerved even by our Oppoſers, from whom it hath extorted this Confeſſion, that (*r*) *True Piety is of high Benefit to Society, as it engages all Men to do thoſe outward Actions which are beneficial to Society.* Now thoſe who can allow thus much, ſhould methinks be led to this eaſy and natural Inference; that therefore it is the Magiſtrates Buſineſs as *Guardian* of the publick Civil Good, to promote and encourage *true Piety.* But inſtead of this it is immediately added, that the Civil Magiſtrate *has it not in his Office to encourage true Piety*; and 'tis perpetually inculcated upon us that his concern reaches no farther than to the *outward Actions* or *Behaviour* of Men.

Now tho' this Notion appears at firſt Sight to be as abſurd as it is new; yet becauſe it is ſo much inſiſted upon, it may not be amiſs to ſearch to the Bottom of it. And as to the meaning of it (which muſt firſt of all be ſtated) one would moſt readily apprehend, that by the *outward Actions*, is underſtood the *Material* Action, conſider'd as ſeparated from the *Will* or *Intention* of the Agent. For tho' we have been told, that the *Will* or *Intention* enters into the *Eſſence* or *Formality* of an *Action*, as that which diſtinguiſhes it from an *Event* or *Paſſion*; I muſt beg leave to ſay that this is a mere Arbitrary Aſſertion, and contrary to the common Uſe of Language. That *Intention* enters into the Eſſence of a *Moral* Action, I know well enough; and the Reaſon is plain, becauſe without *Intention* there

(*r*) Ibid. p. 232.

can

can be no *Morality*. But *Action* there may be, where there is no *Intention*; for otherwiſe *all* Actions would be *Moral Actions*, and Philoſophers would talk Nonſenſe when they diſtinguiſh them into *Voluntary* and *Involuntary*. But not to trouble the Reader with ſuch Nicetys as theſe; We will take them according to their own Explication, and their Meaning is, That the *outward Actions* of Men conſider'd as diſtinguiſhed (not from the *Intention*, but) from the *inward Motive* or *Principle* of Action, are the *only* Object of the Magiſtrates concern.

I ſay then that this Notion is *abſurd*, becauſe it makes it to be no Part of the Magiſtrates Concern to cultivate and improve the Principles, (I will not ſay of *Religion*, for this to beſure was the Thing intended, but the Principles) even of *Human* and *Social Virtue*. The Writers upon this Subject have been very fond of late of (*s*) ſeparating Religion from Civil Government, even ſo far as to ſuppoſe Men *uncapable* of Religion, and yet *capable* of entering into Society. The Suppoſition, I preſume, they themſelves ſee to be Nonſenſe, becauſe the ſame *Reaſon* and *Underſtanding* which qualifies a Man for *Society*, brings him alſo under the Laws of *Religion*. But it is as good in *my* Hands, I hope, as it is in *theirs*; and therefore, to pleaſure them, let us for once ſuppoſe all Religion baniſhed out of the World, and a Government erected merely upon Maxims of *worldly Policy*. Now tho' we have taken care to ſhut out all Religion, here will ſtill be what I call (and I think not improperly) *Human* and *Social Virtue*. For Man is

(*s*) Ibid. p. 229.

ſtill

ſtill ſuppoſed to be a reaſonable Creature, enter'd into Society for the Enjoyment of Civil Priviledges; and conſequently he muſt, as ſuch, think himſelf bound to ſuch a Behaviour as will beſt ſerve the Intereſts of Society. Is it now any Part of the Magiſtrates Concern to encourage and promote this *inward Principle?* No, ſay they, for the Magiſtrates Concern reaches no farther than to the *outward Behaviour*, conſider'd as *diſtinguiſhed* from the *inward Principle*. But let them but attend to the force of their own Rule, and the Caſe will be clear. Whatever affects the publick Civil Good, falls within the Magiſtrates Care: If then the Principles of *Social Virtue* do affect the publick Civil Good; the Conſequence muſt be that it is the Magiſtrates Buſineſs to encourage and promote them. And that they do affect the publick Civil Good is plain from this unanſwerable Reaſon; that without them, that *Behaviour* in which the Publick Good conſiſts, can never effectually be ſecured. That Government has always been look't upon to be in an unſound and tottering Condition, where the Obedience of the Subject ſtands upon *Fear* or *Private* Intereſt, and not upon an honeſt Principle of *Duty* and *Affection*; and I am confident our Adverſaries are of the ſame Opinion. May we not then from hence venture to infer, that therefore the Concern of the Magiſtrate extends to the *inward Principle*, as well as to the *outward Action?* I ſhall for once take leave to make the Experiment, and leave it to their great Sagacity to find out, how it comes to paſs, that tho' according to their own Confeſſion it is the Magiſtrates Buſineſs to ſecure the publick Civil Good; it ſhould yet be no Part of his Buſineſs to ſecure the Means upon which the publick Civil Good does neceſſarily depend.

In a Word, ſince, as it is allowed, Men as Subjects, are to be conſider'd as Reaſonable Creatures entered into Society; it muſt be the Concern of the Magiſtrate to provide as much as in him lies, that they perform a reaſonable Obedience; which an Obedience void of the Principles of *Social Virtue* certainly is not. But how ſhall the Magiſtrate encourage *Social Virtue*? Why if this be all the Difficulty (and I can think of no other) I ſhould hope that it is already removed. The Magiſtrate may encourage *Social Virtue* by the ſame Methods by which (as I have ſhewn) he may encourage *Religion*. For that Knowledge of what becomes us as reaſonable Creatures; and that Subduction of Appetite and Paſſion, the Means whereof are evidently in the Magiſtrates Hand: Theſe I ſay, as they are proper to lead Men to the *Fear* of *God*, ſo they are proper to lead them to *Honour the King*. Hard indeed would it be, if it were impoſſible for the Magiſtrate *by all he can do*, to contribute any thing towards effecting that, without which no Government can poſſibly ſubſiſt. But (to mention one thing more) is there nothing in a juſt, wiſe, and diligent Adminiſtration? Nothing in a Paternal Care and Tenderneſs over the Subject exemplified by proper Acts of Beneficence towards thoſe who do well, and of Mercy and Clemency even to thoſe who do ill? Do theſe I ſay tend only to Influence the *outward Act*? Or rather do not they create an *inward Principle* of Loyalty, and beget that mutual Confidence which ſupports Society? If not; let no Prince hereafter think himſelf ſecure by virtue of ſuch Methods. For there is in this Reſpect plainly no difference between him that ſways the Sceptre of Righteouſneſs, and him that ruleth with a Rod of Iron.

But

But to return; The Reader is desired to take especial Notice, that the Tendency of what is now offered is only to shew, that the Magistrate's Office is not confined merely to the *Outward Behaviour* of his Subjects, but that it reaches *at least* to the Principles of *Social Vertue*. Let us now try if you please, whether there be not room enough for *Religion* to stand upon the same Footing. But why do I say *try*? The Case is evident. For if it be the Magistrates Concern to cultivate and improve *Social Virtue* as that without which Society can never be secure; for the same Reason it must also be his Concern to cultivate and improve the Principles of *Religion*, which are a Means relative to the same End. As *Social Virtue* is the only sure Foundation of *Civil Obedience*; so *Religion* is the only sure Foundation of *Social Virtue*: which two Things tho' they may be distinguished in the Idea, do yet in Fact generally go together. To be under a just Sense of our Duty towards God, and to serve him under the Prospect of those Motives of Obedience which he hath propounded; this I presume is what deserves the Name of *true* Religion. Now he who is thus disposed, must be supposed to be furnished (unless some unhappy Error intervenes) with all those virtuous Principles by which Society is supported and mantained. But take away this, and the Virtue which remains, I fear will be so small as to be hardly worth the reckoning. For there is no Principle which will be strong enough to hold the generality of Men, when once the Bands of Religion are untyed, and they are under no manner of awe from any Being, but those who are like themselves; whose Knowledge they are many times able

to deceive, and to whoſe Power they very frequently find themſelves ſuperior. This is ſo true, that thoſe who upon Principles of *Philoſophy and vain deceit* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) have undertaken to diſpute Religion out of the World; when they have been preſſed to give an Account, how it has happen'd that all Civilized Nations have agreed in the Belief of a God, and of a Providence, if there were no Foundation for it in that common Reaſon which is given to all; have generally anſwered that it is a Contrivance of State intended for no other Purpoſe than to preſerve the Peace and Order of Societies. I need not I perſume ſtay to anſwer the Argument; But the Objection itſelf is an ample Confeſſion, that all Nations in the World have look't upon Religion, as a neceſſary Means to Support Government; and there is nothing which Experience does more conſtantly verify. If then the Publick Civil Good cannot, either at all, or ſo well, be ſecured without Religion; what can be more evident than that it is the Concern of the Civil Magiſtrate, as he is the Protector of the Publick Civil Good, to take care of Religion?

The Reſult then is this; That the Magiſtrate as he is the Guardian of the Publick Civil Good, is *directly* concerned with the *outward Behaviour* of his Subjects, and that he is *indirectly* concerned with *Riligion* too, as it is a Principle of outward Action; the Pretence or Abuſe whereof, will generally determine the Behaviour of the Subject, either to the Good or Hurt of the Commonwealth. A Propoſition ſo exceeding clear and evident, that one may juſtly wonder what ſhould lead Men to ſo much extravagancy, as, ſeparating the *outward Act* from the *internal Motive*

Motive or *Principle*, to confine the Magiſtrates Care to the former, as diſtinguiſhed from the latter. Now the main Foundation of this Miſtake (next to that weak Pretence, that it is *impoſſible* for the Magiſtrate to be inſtrumental in regulating the Inward Principle, which has largely been refuted: Next to this I ſay, that which hath contributed moſt towards leading theſe Writers into this Miſtake) is their taking the Meaſure of the Magiſtrates *Office* from what falls under his *Cognizance* when he diſpenſes *Rewards* or *Puniſhments*. (*t*) If, ſay they, *the* ACTIONS *of Men without conſidering the* INTERNAL PRINCIPLE, *from which they proceed, are the Points which lye before the* Magiſtrate, (*i. e.* when he puniſheth Offenders) *then neither Religion* AS *Religion, nor Virtue* AS *Virtue, are his Proper Concern, but the outward Action* ONLY. That is, in ſhort, becauſe in diſpenſing Puniſhments the Magiſtrate conſiders only the *outward Act*, therefore his Office reaches no farther then to the *outward Act*. But certainly this is a very wild Inference! The Reaſon, and the only Reaſon, why the Magiſtrate in theſe Caſes conſiders only the *outward Act*, is becauſe he can *judge* only of the *outward Act*, *i. e.* he hath generally no certain Rule whereby to determine what the true Motive or Principle is, from whence any Action proceeds. But the Magiſtrates being unable to *judge* of the *Inward Principle* will never prove that his *Office* has *no relation* to the *Inward Principle*; becauſe (as may be ſhown by a variety of Inſtances) a Man's *Office*, *Concern*, or *Buſineſs*, may relate to thoſe Things which in

(*t*) Anſw. p. 246.

the nature of them are removed from the reach of his Cognizance. If theſe Writers pay any regard to Reaſon or Scripture they muſt acknowledge that it is the proper Concern of every Parent, not merely to regulate the *outward Behaviour* of his *Child*; but to make him truly *Virtuous* and *Religious*: And yet it is evident that in *rewarding* the Child when he does Well, or in *puniſhing* him when he does Ill, the Parent does exactly what the Magiſtrate does (and he can do no otherwiſe) *i. e.* he takes Cognizance of the *outward Action* only. Again; what is it that the *Church* takes Cognizance of in judging its Members? Is it not the *outward Act* and that *only*? But is it right, think you, from thence to conclude, that the *Church* hath no Concern with the *Inward Principle*? Shall we make the Laws of God, juſt ſuch *Beauty waſhes* (I make bold to borrow the Dean of *Chicheſters* Compariſon) as they have made the Laws of the State? ——— But to proceed: If the Reaſon why the Magiſtrate in theſe Caſes conſiders not the *Internal Principle*, be his Inability to *Judge* of it; will you give me leave to ſay that *if he could* Judge of it, it would be his Buſineſs to conſider it? Whether you will or will not the Thing is evident. For 1ſt, As to the Caſe of *Puniſhment*; let us ſuppoſe an Offence committed either out of a miſtaken Zeal for the good of Commonwealth, or upon a Principle of Religion and Conſcience; Although, for a Reaſon which ſhall hereafter be mentioned, the Magiſtrate ought not ſo far to conſider the *Inward Principle*, as not to puniſh the Offender; yet, ſuppoſing him certainly to know it, he ought thus far to conſider it, as to ſhow all the Favour and Clemency that the Caſe will admit

admit of, and not puniſh him with the ſame Severity that he would puniſh another, who thro' a wicked Contempt of the Magiſtrates Authority, ſhould be guilty of the ſame or of a like Crime. On the other hand, let us ſuppoſe no Offence at all committed, *i. e.* no Law of the State tranſgreſſed by any *Overt Act*; I will not ask here whether a *formed Intention* to offend ought not in Reaſon to have the ſame Effect; (for this is beſides the preſent Argument.) But I will go much farther and ask, whether ſuppoſing a Man, without ſo much as any formed Intention to offend againſt the Laws of his Country, to be under a ſettled *Principle* of *Diſloyalty* or *Diſaffection* to the Government; Whether, I ſay, in ſuch a Caſe the Magiſtrate, if he knew it, would not have a Right to puniſh him? To me it is evident that he would. For ſuch a Principle being inconſiſtent with the Publick Security, there is juſt the ſame Reaſon why he ſhou'd baniſh ſuch a Subject out of his Dominions, as there is why he ſhould hang the Thief that robs upon the High-way. 2ly, This Point is yet more evident with repect to *Rewards*, which no Magiſtrate, who has Senſe, ever diſpenſeth to the *Outward Act*, any otherwiſe than as ſuch an *Act* is conſider'd as an *Indication* of the *Inward Principle*. When a Prince beſtows a Place of Honour or Profit upon one of his Subjects as a Reward for Services done to the Publick, what does he mean? Does he conſider theſe Services merely as *Outward Acts* beneficial to Society? Certainly not. For admit that the Man be a Traytor in his Heart, and that he ſerved the Publick only to ſerve himſelf; Will the Magiſtrate, ſuppoſing him to be well aſſured of this, even then beſtow the Reward? If he has Senſe, I ſay, he

will not. He conſiders therefore the *outward Act* as a *Sign* or *Token* of the good *Diſpoſition*, the Preſumption of which, muſt always be the proper Reaſon why any Man is Rewarded. What now is the Conſequence of theſe Obſervations? Why plainly this: That the Magiſtrate is concerned with the *inward Principle*, as well as with the *outward Behaviour*. For how comes it to paſs that he is obliged to *conſider* the *inward Principle*, ſuppoſing him to know it, if the *inward Principle* be none of his Concern? Is it right think you, for the Magiſtrate either in *Rewarding* or *Puniſhing*, to be determined by a Conſideration which hath no relation to the Office he bears? I ſhall be told perhaps, that the ſuppoſing the Magiſtrate to be able to *judge* of the *inward Principle* alters the Caſe, and makes that to be his Concern, which otherwiſe is not his Concern. But this is a jeſt: For mere *Knowledge*, can only direct the Exerciſe of a Power where it already is; it cannot create a Power where it is not. If the Magiſtrate certainly knew what I *dream't* of laſt Night; my Condition, I conceive, as a Civil Subject would be neither better nor worſe; and why? Why becauſe the Magiſtrate has nothing to do with any one's *Dreams*. And if he has as little to do with Men's *Principles* as with their *Dreams*, what Difference can it make whether he knows them, or whether he knows them not? But the Magiſtrate has thus much to do with Men's Principles, *viz.* That it is his Buſineſs by all poſſible and lawful Methods, to encourage thoſe good one's upon which the Publick Security depends, and therefore to encourage the Principles of natural Religion, becauſe, as has been ſhewn, the Publick Security depends upon them. That he cannot

judge

judge of the *inward Diſpoſition*, doth in no wiſe alter the Caſe. It may be a Reaſon perhaps why the ſucceſs of his Endeavours will be attended with the greater uncertainty: But it no more proves that *Religion* is none of his *Concern*, than a *Biſhops* or any other *Clergyman*'s inability to *judge* of the *inward Diſpoſition*, will prove that *true Chriſtianity* is none of *his* Concern.

Thus far I have conſider'd the publick Civil Good, only as it is capable of being affected by the Behaviour of the Subject. But, 2. There is another Way (as I obſerved at firſt) by which the publick Civil Good may be affected, and that is by the Hand of God; ſending either *Bleſſing* or *Curſing* upon a Nation; either immediately or by the Interpoſition of his Creatures, as the Inſtruments of executing his Will. That the publick Civil Good is upon this Account, concerned in the Religion of the Subject; is a Point which not only the Scriptures every where bear Witneſs to, but which even the Heathens acknowledged by the Light of Nature, as appears from ſeveral Paſſages cited by *Grotius*, and by many more which it would, I conceive, be no difficult Matter to lay together. Now the proper Uſe that is to be made of this Obſervation is plain and obvious; to wit, That foraſmuch as Religion or the want of it, is the Means of bringing down God's *Bleſſing* or his *Curſe* upon any Nation or People; therefore the Magiſtrate as he tenders the Publick Good, is concerned to provide that God be honoured and obeyed by all who are within the reach of his Authority. We ſhould look upon that Prince to be extreamly wanting in his Duty; who ſhould not uſe all imaginable Caution, to prevent his Subjects from affronting a Potent Neighbour, whom he knew

to

to be in a Condition to fall upon him and ruine his Dominions. And is it right think you, to be afraid of an earthly Monarch, and not to dread the Sovereign of the World? But this Argument hath been ſo well urg'd by the Dean of *Chicheſter* in his *Conſiderations*, that I need only ſtay to conſider how well it has been anſwered. The Subſtance of what has been ſaid comes to this, *viz.* 1. That (*u*) *ſome* of thoſe Paſſages in Scripture which are uſually alledged on this Occaſion, are *Promiſes and Threatnings*, which *reſpected the* Jewiſh *Nation* ONLY, *the declared* SANCTIONS *of whoſe Laws were Temporal.* Now the thing is true enough, that the *Jewiſh* Law was enforced by Temporal Sanctions, to which there can be no doubt but that many of theſe Paſſages relate. But this helps not the Buſineſs forward in the leaſt: For ſtill there may be other Paſſages in Scripture which have no peculiar reference to the *Jews*, and which confirm what (as I obſerved juſt now) the Light of Nature teaches, to wit, that it is the Method of God by the direct Interpoſition of his Providence, to puniſh *any* Nation which ſhall ſhew a Contempt of his Laws. Are there then any ſuch Paſſages, or are there not? Why here we are treated with much reſerve. For we are told in Effect, 2. That *all the other* Paſſages, are *declarations of the Tendency of good and evil Practices; of what is called* Morality *and* Immorality, *to the Publick Safety or Ruine of Nations, in thoſe Methods by which God is reſolved in his wiſe Providence to govern the World*; which is ſaying no more than what a mere *Fataliſt* might ſay, For by

(*u*) Anſw. p. 180.

thoſe

thoſe Methods which God hath reſolved in his wiſe Providence to govern the World, no more may be meant than the *general Courſe* and *Order* of Things, as *at firſt* eſtabliſhed by God: And then by the *Tendency of good and evil Practices*, muſt be underſtood the *Natural Effect* of good and evil Practices, as reſulting from that *general Order*. So that we are ſtill at a Loſs, to know whether it be allowed or diſallowed (what is now ſuppoſed as warranted from Scripture, to wit,) That God doth at any Time by his *Special* Providence, interpoſe to correct the Wickedneſs of a Nation by Temporal Judgments. But we will ſuppoſe (becauſe it is the moſt charitable Suppoſition) that it is allowed, and ſee what the reſt of the Anſwer will come to. It is ſaid then that theſe Paſſages *were directed not to* Magiſtrates *peculiarly, but to* all *Men*. No doubt; and as the *People* are to make that Uſe of them which is proper to their Station; ſo the *Magiſtrate* is to make that Uſe of them which is proper to his. What Uſe the *People* ought to make of them is a Point which falls not within the preſent Queſtion: and therefore it ſignifies nothing to enquire, whether the Account here given of it be exactly right. But common Senſe will teach us this ſhort Leſſon, that foraſmuch as the Sins of a Nation, are made up of the Sins of particular Perſons; every Man ſhould take care to do his Duty faithfully, leſt he be Inſtrumental in bringing down the Vengeance of God upon his Country. And what is the Uſe that the *Magiſtrate* ought to make of theſe Declarations? Why it ſeems they are *Arguments to all in Authority, to do their utmoſt to reſtrain all ſuch* outward Acts *as have that evil Tendency* —— How! *Outward Acts* do you ſay! Is it enough to Appeaſe an angry God

God to reſtrain the *outward Act* only! Can the ſearcher of Hearts be deceived by an *outward Appearance!* This carries too groſs a Sound; and therefore it is immediately added—— *and to encourage every Thing which promotes* TRUE GOODNESS *as far as it lies within their Reach.* Here's ſomething in this! For this is the very Inference which the *Dean* has drawn, and which every Man of common Senſe muſt draw; to wit, That it is the Magiſtrates concern to encourage *true Goodneſs*, or (which is all one) *true Religion*; which he doth, who encourages that which promotes *true Goodneſs*. But what Senſe is there in acknowledging that the Magiſtrate is concerned to encourage *true Goodneſs to the utmoſt of his Power*, and declaring it at every Turn, that the Magiſtrate with *all* his Power *cannot* encourage it? To ſay that the Magiſtrate is bound to encourage true Religion *ſo far as it is in his Power* to do it, is to ſuppoſe that in *ſome Degree* or other *it is* in his Power to do it, or it is to ſay nothing. But this is what this Author flatly denies; and therefore at *p.* 232. he ſpeaks more roundly and undiſguiſedly, and ſays, that as to God's Judgments, *the Concern of the* Civil Magiſtrate *in this Affair is to do his own Duty conſcientiouſly*, which is, *to diſcourage all thoſe* OUTWARD PRACTICES *injurious to Society, which are founded upon Impiety from whatever Root they proceed.* And this it ſeems is *all*; For, adds he, *if this be all he* CAN *do towards it, then this is all that can be implied in his Office, or expected of him.* Now this for my Life I cannot underſtand. For ſince the Reaſon why God ſends his Judgments upon any Nation, is now ſuppoſed to be it's *Impiety*: The Argument to the Civil Magiſtrate is either *none at all*, or it is this, that he is to *remove Impiety*, which

which is not done by removing the *outward Act* only. If indeed the Magiſtrate *cannot* encourage Religion, nor therefore *remove Impiety*; this is a Reaſon ſufficient to ſhew that it is none of his *Concern*, and conſequently that he can have no Concern in ſuch Paſſages as theſe: But whether he *can* or *cannot*, is a Point which I ſhall now very willingly leave to the Reader: and if it appears that he *can*, the Conſideration before us is a good Argument to prove that he *ought* to do it by the Authors own Confeſſion.

It appears then, I hope by this Time, that the Care of Religion, by and under the Law of Nature, does belong to the Office of the Magiſtrate, conſider'd as he is the *Guardian* of the *publick Civil Good.* It remains now to be conſider'd whether ſecuring the *Lives*, *Liberties*, and *Profeſſions* of the Subject, be the *only* End of the Magiſtrates Appointment; or whether his Office hath not a *direct*, *immediate* relation to Religion, as well as to the *Civil* or *Worldly* Intereſt's of Men. The Writers on the other ſide, with one Conſent maintain that it hath *not*: But of good Reaſons to ſupport this Aſſertion there is every where a great Scarcity. The Author before mentioned, contents himſelf only with obſerving, that if (*w*) you *take away the Neceſſity and Conveniency of Men's entring into Societies for Protection and Defence in their Civil Concerns*; *you take away all Neceſſity and Uſefulneſs of the Magiſtrates Office*: And this he thinks to be an *unanſwerable Argument*, that *thoſe Concerns* are the *only* End to which the Office of the Magiſtrate is relative. Now the Obſervation without doubt is true: For the *Neceſſity* and

(*w*) Ibid. p. 175.

Con-

Conveniency of Men's entring into Society for Protection and Defence, reſulting from the *Corruption* and *Depravity* of Mankind, whereby they are diſpoſed to offer *Violence* one to another; To take away this *neceſſity* and *conveniency*, is to take away that *Depravity*, i. e. it is to ſuppoſe that all Men *are* as they *ought* to be; upon which Foot there would be no need of a Magiſtrate, either for Protection or any thing elſe. But now if I ſhould ſay, That the ſame *Depravity* which renders Society *uſeful* and *neceſſary* with Reſpect to Men's *Civil* Intereſts, renders it alſo *uſeful* and *neceſſary* with Reſpect to their *Religious*; and that the Office of the Magiſtrate was appointed with a View to this *latter* End, as well as with a View to the *former*, (which I hope is *Senſe* at leaſt;) this *unanſwerable Argument* (as it is called) would dwindle away into a mere *Nothing*, and leave the Matter juſt in the ſame Condition in which it found it.—— But I purſue the Queſtion in it's natural Order; of which that the Meaning may be the better underſtood, I muſt obſerve, That *Religion*, conſider'd as it is under the Law of Nature, and *Civil Intereſt* can never *in Fact* be ſeparated the one from the other. All Deviations from the external Law of Reaſon, do *directly* or *indirectly*, in a *greater* Meaſure or in a *leſs*, affect the Happineſs of Civil Society: Upon which Account, as I have ſhewn, it is the Magiſtrates proper Concern, to provide (as far as in him lies) that Obedience be paid to the Dictates of Reaſon. But the Point now is, whether this be the ONLY Argument to prove that the Magiſtrate is concerned with Religion, or whether the Care of Religion does THEREFORE ONLY belong to the Magiſtrate, BECAUSE Religion affects the publick Civil Good. I maintain the Negative, and ſhall endea-

endeavour to prove, that the Magiſtrate is concerned with Religion upon *its own* Account; inſomuch that if you could ſuppoſe Religion to have *no Relation* to publick Civil Good, the Care of Religion would ſtill belong to the Magiſtrates Office.

But before I enter upon this it will be proper to conſider, *how* or *by what way* the Care of Religion may be ſuppoſed *conveyable* to the Magiſtrate: Becauſe it hath been inſinuated by ſome modern Writers, as if the Thing were in it's own Nature *impoſſible*. This ſeems to have been the Caſe of Mr. *Locke*, who perpetually ſuppoſes that to veſt the Magiſtrate with the Care of Religion, is (*x*) to *abandon the Care of one's own Salvation, and blindly to leave it to the Choice of* the Magiſtrate *to preſcribe what Faith or Worſhip we ſhall embrace*. Now this (as he truly obſerves) is impoſſible: *For no Man can if he would conform his Faith to the Dictates of another*: i. e. It is in no Man's Power to believe juſt as another would have him believe; and he might have added, that no Man has or can have ſuch a Right over himſelf, as in Matters which concern Religion and God's Worſhip to lay himſelf under an Obligation, to *act* according to the Dictates of another, in oppoſition to the Dictates of his own Mind. (*y*) *It would be abſurd if a Man*

(*x*) 1*ſt*, Letter concerning Toleration, *p.* 9.

(*y*) Abſurdum foret ſi futurus Civis ita Imperaturo ſe obſtringeret; Submitto Voluntatem meam Voluntati tuæ etiam in Hoc, ut ad arbitrium tuum velim amare, venerari Deum, in Deo confidere; aut plus tibi Fidei quam Deo adhibere; aut te volente ejus amorem, venerationem, obſequium omittere; aut tuo Juſſu ejuſmodi Signa adhibere quæ Naturam Dei deſtruunt.

Man about to enter into Society ſhould Stipulate with the Perſon deſign'd as ſupreme Magiſtrate in this Manner; " *I ſubmit my will to yours, even in this* " *that I will love, worſhip, and truſt in God ac-* " *cording to your liking;*" *Or thus;* " *I will con-* " *fide in you, rather than in God;*" *Or* " *I will* " *forbear to Love, Worſhip, and obey him if you pleaſe.*" *Or* " *I will make uſe of ſuch Signs or outward Ex-* " *preſſions of Worſhip as deſtroy, or are inconſiſtent* " *with the Nature of God, if you command me.*" This I ſay is abſurd, becauſe it ſuppoſes it poſſible for Men to diveſt themſelves of that Religion which they bear to God as the ſupreme Lawgiver. But then it is to be conſidered, that to veſt the Magiſtrate with the publick Care of Religion carries along with it no ſuch *Obligation* as is here ſuppoſed. For the Publick Care of Religion conſiſts (as has been ſhewn) in providing by Law, both that Inſtruction be duly adminiſtred, and that it may have its proper Effect upon the Minds of Men: And the Methods before ſpecified for the doing of both are of ſuch a ſort, as that the giving the Magiſtrate a Power to make uſe of them implies no ſort of *Promiſe*, or *Stipulation* blindly to ſubmit to whatever the Magiſtrate ſhall think fit to Appoint as touching

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deſtruunt. *Thus the Learned* Puffendorf *in his Treatiſe* De Habitu Religionis Chriſtianæ ad Vitam Civilem, *p.* 17, 18. *But it is to be obſerved that the* Baron *does not obſerve this as a direct Proof that the People cannot ſtipulate with the Magiſtrate about Matters of Religion* (*as Mr.* Locke *has done*;) *nor does he indeed any where teach any ſuch Thing. But the Deſign of it was to ſhew that Men have not the ſame Right to give up their* Religious Liberty, *as they have to give up their* Civil; *or that they cannot traffick with their* Conſciences, *as they may with their* Money *and* Eſtates: *A Propoſition more than enough evident.*

Religion,

Religion. If I conſent that the Magiſtrate ſhall have Authority to diſtribute yearly out of the Publick Stock, ſo much Money as he ſhall judge to be neceſſary and convenient for the Maintenance of Publick Teachers, I do not hereby ſo much as *pretend* to engage my ſelf not to examine their Doctrines, and either to embrace or reject them, as I ſhall ſee moſt Reaſonable. And if I conſent yet farther that he ſhall have Power to make Uſe of *outward Reſtraint*, as a Bridle to Wantonneſs, I ſtill leave my ſelf at liberty, either to differ from the Religion of the Magiſtrate, and ſubmit to the Inconveniences which ſhall be laid upon me, or to adhere to it and avoid them. In ſhort, to veſt the Magiſtrates with the Care of Religion, is not *to abandon the Care of our own Salvation*, but to give up a Part of our *Liberty* and *Property* in order to promote the Salvation of ourſelves and of others; which if any one thinks to be a weak and imprudent Thing, I hope in Time to convince him of his Miſtake; but ſurely no Man can ſay that it is *impoſſible*. I ſhall only add that this Objection has very little to do with the Controverſy, under the View in which we are now conſidering it: For the Suppoſition of a *diverſity* of *Opinions* about Religion (upon which it reſts) muſt relate chiefly to Points of *Revealed* Religion; becauſe concerning the Doctrines of *Natural* Religion, there is and always has been a general Agreement.

It being clear then that a Right to take care of Religion, is in the Nature of it *capable* of being conveyed to the Magiſtrate, I come to the main Inquiry *viz.* Whether it doth not appear that ſuch a Right does *in fact* belong to him, from Conſiderations which have no Relation to the *Publick* Civil *Good*. For the determining

which Point, it will be neceſſary to enquire into the *Nature* and *Deſign* of *Commonwealths*, it being certain that nothing can be the End of the Magiſtrates Office which may not be conſider'd as an End of Men's entring into Society. Our Adverſaries conſider a Commonwealth as a Number of Men entered into Society merely for *Temporal* or *Worldly* Ends, and therefore ſay that *Worldly Things* are the ſole Object of the Magiſtrate's Concern. On the contrary, I conſider a Commonwealth as a Number of Men aſſociated not only for *Worldly* Ends but for the Ends of *Religion*, and thence infer that his Care extends itſelf to Religion likewiſe. This is the Difference, for the Deciſion of which, ſince we are call'd back to the *Original Inſtitution* of *Commonwealths*, thither therefore we will go. I ſhall only premiſe, that this Inquiry does not lead us to conſider what was *in fact* the End propounded, when Men firſt of all enter'd into Society: For beſides that this is impoſſible to be aſcertained, at this diſtance of Time, I do not ſee that it ſignifies any thing to the Purpoſe. Mr. *Locke* tells us that (*b*) *there are Nations in the* Weſt-Indies *who have no other End of their Society, but their Mutual Defence, againſt their Common Enemies: In theſe* (ſays he) *their* Captain *or* Prince *is* Sovereign *in time of War; But in time of Peace, neither he, nor any body elſe, has any Authority over any of the Society.* Now had this been the nature of the firſt Commonwealth, I ſee not how this can determine the Nature and Conſtitution of ſuch Bodies in after Ages: For Commonwealths were at firſt framed for ſuch Ends and Purpoſes as were *then* found

(z) 2d. Letter, p. 54.

to be needful, which probably were not (*b*) ALL that longer Experience taught to be ſo. If at firſt Men thought it ſufficient to guard themſelves only againſt *Common Enemies*, it might be and was afterwards found neceſſary to ſecure themſelves alſo againſt *Mutual Wrongs*; and no one doubts but that (notwihſtanding any former Precedent) a Commonwealth may be as juſtly founded upon both theſe Views as upon one of them only. So that I ſay, admitting it for Truth, that *at firſt* there was not the leaſt Mixture of Religious concerns in the framing of Commonwealths; yet if in after Ages it was found *Reaſonable* and *Fitting* to take in the Concerns of Religion, the *Right* to do it cannot be queſtioned, and the Magiſtrate's Authority to interpoſe in the Affairs of Religion, in Commonwealths ſo conſtituted, will be plain and indiſputable.

The true and only way therefore to come to a Deciſion of this Point, will be to conſider what Ends or Purpoſes, a Number of Men in a State of Liberty, would by a right Uſe of their Reaſon, moſt naturally propoſe in framing themſelves into a Compleat and Perfect Commonwealth. For a Commonwealth framed upon thoſe Ends muſt be a Commonwealth framed according to the *Original Inſtitution* of ſuch Bodies, *i. e.* if not according to what Commonwealths at firſt *actually were*, yet according to what in Reaſon they *ought to have been*. This is the only proper and pertinent Senſe I am able to put upon this Phraſe; So that the Queſtion at laſt amounts to this, Whether it be in the *Na-*

(*a*) *See Mr.* Berbyrac's *Note upon* Puffendorf *of the* Law *of* Nature. *Book* 7. *Chap.* 1. §. 7.

true of the Thing *reaſonable* and *fitting* that the Magiſtrate *ſhould* be veſted with the Care of Religion or not. The Reader doubtleſs has obſerved that hitherto I have been contented to argue with our Adverſaries upon their own *Hypotheſis*; to wit, That the *Supreme Authority* in every Commonwealth is *originally* founded upon the *Conſent* or *Voluntary Agreement* of the *People*: And this is the *Hypotheſis* upon which I intend to proceed, becauſe it will ſignify little to confute Men upon Principles which they do not acknowledge.

Thus much then I am willing to grant to our Oppoſers, *viz.* That, ſuppoſing a Number of Men in a State of Liberty, the *firſt* and *leading* Motives to induce them to abridge themſelves of that Liberty, and coaleſce into a Body Politick, would, probably, be the ſecuring themſelves from *Violence* and *Wrong*. For the Conveniencies and Inconveniencies of this preſent Life, being the Things which ordinarily make quickeſt and moſt ſenſible Impreſſions upon the Mind of Man; 'tis natural to ſuppoſe, that a Concern for theſe, would on ſuch an Occaſion be uppermoſt in their Thoughts. But then there is one Queſtion which I very much want to have clearly Reſolved; and that is, Why this Concern for *Civil* Advantages, muſt needs ſhut out all Concern for *Religion*; or, Why thoſe ſame Men who enter into Society for the Security of their *Lives*, *Liberties*, and *Poſſeſſions*, may not alſo, in entring into Society, have a farther Regard to the *Honour* of the *Supreme Being*. The Caſe you know ſuppoſes that the Men who are now framing themſelves into a Commonwealth do make a *right Uſe* of their Reaſon: Now where Reaſon is rightly exerciſed, there muſt always be a dutiful Reverence

Reverence to God, and a juſt Concern for the Honour of his Laws; which, thoſe who are poſſeſſed of it, will take care to preſerve, not in *themſelves* only, but in *others* alſo, to the uttermoſt of their Power. If then it be apparent to Reaſon, that the Benefit of Civil Government extends itſelf to *Religion*, as well as to *Worldly Good*; why, I pray, *muſt* a reaſonable Man, or rather how *can* a reaſonable Man, be ſolicitous about the latter, to neglect the former? Or, why will not his Reverence to God lead him to provide for the *One*, as well as his Regard to himſelf leads him to provide for the *Other*? The dependences of Religion upon Society every one muſt be ſuppoſed to have experienced in his own Family. For *Families* are *Societies*: And as every *Father* or *Maſter* is the Head of a little *Commonwealth*, ſo every *Magiſtrate* is but the Head of a large *Family*. Tell me then if you can, why thoſe who think it right as Fathers or Maſters, to make uſe of their Authority to ſecure (as much as in them lies) the Honour of God, ſhould not think it right to veſt the Magiſtrate with the ſame Power; or why it is reaſonable that Religion ſhould be taken Care of in private Families, and not reaſonable that it ſhould be taken Care of in the Commonwealth.

If theſe Conſiderations be duly attended to, it will not, I conceive, appear ſo unexceptionably clear, that Commonwealths, according to their *Original Inſtitution*, reſpect the *Civil Intereſts* of Men excluſive of the Ends of *Religion*. But whether it be, that they thought it a Point too plain to need any Proof, or too embarras't to admit of any; ſo it is, that the Writers upon this Subject have generally taken it for granted. The Learned *Puffendorf*, indeed, muſt ſtand as

an Exception, who (in the Treatiſe before referred to) not only aſſerts the Thing, but gives his Reaſons for it; which, for the Reader's Satisfaction, I ſhall here ſet down in his own Words. (*b*) *Since*, ſays he, *Religion and the Worſhip of God may as well be exerciſed by a few, as by many; as well in a ſmall, as in a large Congregation: There was therefore no need upon that Account, to frame* Societies *made up of a great and powerful Number of Men. Eſpecially ſince thoſe* Injuries *to which Mankind was expoſed, and which at firſt induced Men to form themſelves into* Commonwealths, *had no Tendency to turn them aſide from the* Worſhip *of* God; *but only to deprive them of their* Lives, *their* Liberties, *and their* Poſſeſſions. *Nor does it in itſelf, or in the Nature of the Thing, at all concern* Religion *and* God's Worſhip, *that a Man lives in* Society *with many; ſince every ſingle Perſon in this Affair ſtands upon his own Bottom; nor is a Man therefore* Religious, *becauſe he converſes with others that are ſo. Moreover, thoſe* Maſters *of* Families *who lived before there were any* Commonwealths, *were as remarkable for their*

(*b*) Cum Religio & Divinus Cultus non minus commode a paucis quam a multis Hominibus, in exiguo quam magno coetu exerceri queat; non opus fuit ob eam Cauſam Societates ſtruere, magno ac valido Hominum Numero conſtantes. Præſertim cum increbeſcentes Humano in Genere Injuriæ, quæ Mortales primum ad inſtituendas Societates Civiles ſubegerunt, non huc tenderent ut alio a Cultu Dei averterent, ſed ut Vita, Libertate, ac Bonis ipſos ſpoliarent. Neq; etiam per ſe, ad Pietatem & expromendum Dei Cultum facit, in Societate multorum Hominum vivere, cum quilibet Homo pro ſe, cultum ſuum Deo adprobare debeat, nec ideo pius quis ſit, quia cum aliis piis degit. Et qui ante Civitates inſtitutas vixere Patres-familias, non minus Pietatis Laude celebres ſunt, quam qui poſt in Civitatibus vixere. *Ibid.* p. 15.

Piety,

Piety, *as any who have lived in* Commonwealths *afterwards.* This is all that this deſervedly eſteemed Writer has offer'd to ſupport a Notion whoſe Proofs ought to be as ſtrong as the Conſequences of it are great. But all this (in my humble Opinion) is little to the Purpoſe. For tho' it be true, that the entring into Society is not neceſſary to ſecure to a Man the Exerciſe of his Religion, as it is to the enjoyment of his Life, Liberty, and Poſſeſſions: Tho' a Man's Religion is never the better merely for his being in Society, nor the worſe for his being out of it; and tho' there may have been as good Men before this Inſtitution of Commonwealths, as there have been ſince: Tho', I ſay, all this (which I conceive is the whole of what this reaſoning amounts to) be true; yet it will never follow from hence, that Religion may not receive very great Advantages from Society, and that in the framing of a Commonwealth it is not reaſonable to have a Regard to theſe Advantages, as well as to the Advantages of this carnal Life. You and I may be as Religious in a *Deſert* as in a *City*, and ſerve God as faithfully, whether we are under any reſtraint from Human Laws, or whether we are under none; *i. e.* if we are ſo diſpoſed. But who ſees not that the wholſome Laws of Society operate upon the *Diſpoſition* itſelf, and lead many to the Fear of God, who, if left wholly to themſelves, would have trampled his Authority under their Feet? Still therefore, I ſay, the Reaſon is wanting why this End ſhould have no Place in the framing of a Commonwealth; or why thoſe, who arm the Magiſtrates with Power to repel all Violences offer'd to themſelves, ſhould not alſo veſt him with Authority to ſuppreſs all Inſults offer'd to God,

whoſe Honour they ought not to ſet at a lower Rate than their own Safety.

But leſt any one ſhould think that it was this Author's meaning to deny, or that in Reaſon it ought to be denyed, that Religion can receive any Advantage from the Methods of *Civil Adminiſtration*; tho' this Point has been largely ſpoken to in the foregoing Chapter, it may not yet be amiſs to purſue it ſomewhat farther. That the Magiſtrates making Uſe of the Motives of this World, 1. As an Encouragement to the *Induſtry* of *Teachers*, And, 2. As a Check to the *Levity* and *Wantonneſs* of the *Hearers*; that this I ſay is a very *proper* Means to promote both the Knowledge and the Practice of true Religion, abundantly appears from the Reaſons there laid down, which there is no Occaſion for me here to repeat. What I have now to add, is that this is not only a very *proper* Means, but a very *neceſſary* one; *ſo* neceſſary that without it Religion cannot in any tolerable Meaſure be maintained in the World. How far this Obſervation holds with Reſpect to revealed Religion, ſhall be conſider'd in it's proper Place: At preſent we are concerned with Religion as it is under the Law of Nature, which reſults from the true Knowledge both of God and of ourſelves. Now tho' this Knowledge is founded in Reaſon, and muſt therefore be diſcoverable by Reaſon; yet ſince it is the reſult of Reaſon *rightly exerciſed* and *carefully improved*; this plainly leaves Room for all thoſe Errors to creep in, which want of *Judgment*, or want of *Conſideration*, expoſes us to. How great and how many ſuch Errors may be, the Heathen World before the coming of Chriſt (to ſay nothing of thoſe Nations ſince, to whom the preaching of the Goſpel never came)

are

are a lamentable Inſtance; among whom the moſt ſtupid Idolatry every where prevailed, and the vileſt Abominations were practiced under the Name and Colour of Religion: The Reaſon of which was not that God had *left himſelf without Witneſs*; for the Works of the Creation were a ſufficient Evidence of his *eternal Power and Godhead*, and that natural Faculty of diſcerning between Good and Evil, which in a greater or in a leſſer Degree was common to all, would if well employed have led Men generally to a reaſonable Service. But the Caſe was, that what thro' the *Weakneſs* of ſome, and what thro' the *Careleſneſs* and *Inconſiderateneſs* of others, (occaſioned by Pride, Senſuality, and Worldly-mindedneſs,) the Evidences of Truth were ſtifled and ſuppreſs'd, and Reaſon which ſhould have governed the Man, became the Slave to Appetite and Paſſion. Now from theſe Conſiderations, (which no good Writer (*c*) hath fail'd to take Notice of upon proper Occaſions) the neceſſity of an Order of *Teachers*, to explain and inculcate the Duties even of natural Religion, hath rightly been inferred; and we have the Teſtimony of one whoſe *Word*, I preſume, will weigh more with ſome than the *Reaſons* of a ſober Writer, that ſuch an Office (*d*) is *abſolutely neceſſary to the Peace and Happineſs of Society*; i. e. (I ſuppoſe) to the ſecuring that *Morality* and *good Behaviour* upon which the Peace and Happineſs of Society depends. Now if particular Inſtruction be neceſſary to ſecure Morality, it muſt be

(*c*) *See in particular* Dr. Clark, *Evid. of Nat. and Rev. Relig.* Prop. 5. 6.

(*d*) Independent Whig, Numb. 4.

equally

equally ſo, whether you conſider it as relative to the *good* of *Society*, or whether you conſider it abſtractedly under the Notion of *Religion* only: And pray tell me how it is poſſible to engage a ſufficient Number of Men to employ themſelves in this uſeful and neceſſary Work, without making ſome publick Proviſion for their Maintenance and Encouragement. Undoubtedly as the general Corruption we are now ſpeaking of, was owing principally to the great want of Teachers, ſo this want of Teachers was owing to the neglect of the Heathen Magiſtrates. In maintaining thoſe Superſtitious Rites which conſtituted the external Part of their Worſhip, they were indeed more than enough diligent: But Morality was no where publickly taught but in the Schools of the Philoſophers, who by their external Wranglings and Contentions had *ſublimed* it into a *Science*, ſuited only to nice and ſpeculative Heads; and conſequently more proper to ſooth the Pride and Vanity, than to reform the Manners of their Hearers. Beſides, thoſe Parts of their Doctrine which were Plain and Inſtructive, were concealed from thoſe who moſt wanted Inſtruction, I mean the *Vulgar*. For theſe Philoſopers ſubſiſting only upon thoſe Stipends or Salaries which they received from their Pupils as the price of their Labour; thoſe who had no Money, were almoſt ſure to have as little Knowledge; the only Remedy left being the having recourſe to their Writings, which very few were able to underſtand. There were indeed ſome brave, diſintereſt Spirits, who upon the mere proſpect of doing Good, made it their Buſineſs by plain and wholſome Inſtruction, to endeavour the Reformation of Mankind, of which *Socrates* ſtands recorded as a notable Example:

ample: But ſuch Inſtances were exceeding rare; and generally ſpeaking thoſe who were well enough qualified for ſuch a Work, thought it enough to take care of their own Affairs, leaving every one his Neighbour to ſhift for himſelf as well as he was able.

From this Cauſe, I ſay, it happened that groſs Ignorance prevailed over the Face of the whole Earth; which ſufficiently ſhews how neceſſary the Care of the Magiſtrate in providing for the due and regular Adminiſtration of Inſtruction is, even under the Law of Nature. But there is one Thing yet which ſhews the Magiſtrates care to be farther neceſſary, and that is the great *Averſion* in Mankind to *attend* upon the Uſe of thoſe Means which are neceſſary to lead them to the true *Knowledge* of God and of themſelves, and the greater ſtill to frame their *Lives* and *Converſations* agreeably to what they are taught, and do indeed ſufficiently underſtand. This proneneſs to Evil, Philoſophers in all Ages have obſerved and lamented, and it is what every one more or leſs, experiences in himſelf; the Reaſon of which, being evidently founded in the Irregularities of our Fleſhly Appetites, the reſtraining theſe by the *preſent* Application of *worldly Motives*, muſt therefore be not only a proper, but a neceſſary Help towards leading us to Virtue. **Mr.** *Bayle* has obſerved upon ſome Occaſion, That (*e*) *Mankind are too cold and remiſs when they are ſpur'd on by nothing but Reaſon*; which he ſuppoſes to be the Caſe (as indeed it is) when they have no other Motive in view but the proſpect of Good or Evil *to come*. Now

(*e*) *Cited by* Berbeyrac, *in the place above quoted.*

if

if this be right, thoſe ſurely have ſhown themſelves to be very *cold* and negligent Reaſoners, who are for leaving Truth *to ſhift for itſelf*, and laying no other Reſtraint upon Men than what *their own Reaſon* lays them under, as if they COULD WANT *no other Motive.* But what do they ſay for this? Why, that *Men would then be free from all Diſcouragements in their Inquiries after Truth*, and judge of Things *with the greateſt Impartiality:* And when the *Truth* is by this means *found out*, they are, by the ſame bountiful way of Reaſoning, ſet free from all *farther* Diſcouragements, and ſuppoſed upon the mere ſtrength of it's Evidence, forthwith to *purſue* what they apprehend to be their Duty. Now all this, for ought I can tell, might be right, if Man were ſuch a Creature as our Adverſaries might *wiſh* him to be: But taking him as *in Fact he is*, (which is the fair way) the Suppoſition has no foundation in Reaſon, nor is it at all juſtified by Experience. To lay aſide the Uſe of all *Worldly Motives* (which is what they plead for) is not to *deſtroy* Luſt and Appetite, but to leave them to their full ſwing. Now if there be any Thing plain from Experience, this is plain, that where Men's Paſſions are left to reign without controul, they commonly degenerate into Brutes, or ſomething worſe. If the great, and indeed the only Thing which diſcourages Men from inquiring after the Truth be the prevalency of their Fleſhly Appetites, 'tis Nonſenſe to pretend that Men are under *no Diſcouragements* where Paſſion has the utmoſt room to prevail: 'tis therefore alſo abſurd to imagine that Men *can want* no other Motive to lead them to Virtue than the Evidence of Truth, becauſe thoſe ſame Paſſions which hinder them from inquiring after the

the Truth at firſt, may as well hinder them from obeying it afterwards. But if any Man thinks that there is no Senſe in what I ſay, let him ask himſelf this one plain Queſtion: What is it that makes the Uſe of worldly Motives neceſſary to ſupport *Civil Government?* Is it not this, that were Men left under the Influence of *pure Reaſon* only, they would for the moſt part, upon the Proſpect of preſent Pleaſure or Profit, act unreaſonably? Certainly it is; For if Men were diſpoſed to do what they *ought* to do, there would be no Occaſion to put the *Sword* into the Magiſtrates Hand. Now if outward Reſtraint be for this Reaſon neceſſary to the Ends of *Civil Government*, it muſt for the ſame Reaſon be neceſſary to the Ends of *Religion*: And he who without any Regard had to this Conſideration, ſhall draw up Schemes for the Advancement of Religion, will but (as we ſay) make Laws for *Utopia*, and imitate the Folly of that Builder, who with great Labour, and Expence ſhould rear up a Fabrick without conſidering the Dimenſions and Properties of the Creatures it is intended for.

In ſhort, conſidering Man as he really is, compounded of a Soul and Body, diſtracted with Paſſions, and loaded with Infirmities; the Intereſts of Religion will appear then only ſecure, when ſuch a Method is made uſe of as has a due regard to both. And ſo far am I from believing, that if worldly Motives were wholly laid aſide, and Truth and Virtue were attended with no greater preſent Advantages than Error and Wickedneſs; ſo far, I ſay, am I from believing that thoſe bleſſed Effects would follow, which ſome Men are ſo apt to Fancy to themſelves, that I muſt either lay aſide that little Reaſon,

and

and forget that ſmall Experience of the World, which I have, or look for the direct contrary. Divine Truths, inſtead of being conſider'd with the greateſt Impartiality, would ordinarily, I am afraid, be but little thought of. Inſtead of ſerving God *in Spirit and in Truth*, Men would generally grow into a careleſs Neglect of him and his Worſhip: And inſtead of being *Sincere* in Religion, would, if they choſe any at all, chuſe, not that which Reaſon after their moſt diligent Inquiries ſhould lead them to, (for ſuch Induſtry would rarely be found) but that which ſhould be moſt agreeable to their own capricious Humours, and ſuperſtitious Opinions, or beſt ſerved their particular worldly Views. This Argument has a peculiar Force, with reſpect to Religion under the view in which we are now conſidering it, *i. e.* as diſcoverable by the Light of Nature; which tho' indeed it gives a very ſtrong Evidence of the Rewards and Puniſhments of a Life to come, yet this Evidence is not ſo well adapted to common Underſtandings, nor does it come up to the fulneſs of that which Revelation affords us. But ſuppoſing Natural and Revealed Religion to be equal in this reſpect, the Argument will yet maintain it's ground: For the Motives of a Life to come being at too great a diſtance to affect the Paſſions, muſt ſtill come under the Notion of a *Rational* Motive, and can operate upon us only as ſuch.

Now then let us ſtop a while, and once more ask the Queſtion, Why, ſince the Care of the Magiſtrate is not only *uſeful*, but even *neceſſary*, to the Support and Maintenance of true Religion, this End ſhould have no Place in the Conſideration of thoſe who are about to frame themſelves into a Body Politick. Surely in making ourſelves

ſelves the Subjects of Men, we do not ceaſe to be the Subjects of God: His *Will* therefore ſhould be our Rule, to which the Nature and Reaſon of Things ſeem in this Caſe to be as plain a Direction as can be given. Will you ſuffer me to leave the whole Matter with you in a few Words? If it be the Will of God that we ſhould ſerve and obey Him, the Means which he propoſeth for this End, muſt be adapted to the Circumſtances under which he hath created us. Now *you* ſay, that God hath propoſed to lead us to the Obedience of himſelf *purely* by the ſtrength of *Rational Motives*; and *I* ſay, that if God had made us not *Men*, but *Angels*, he could have done no otherwiſe. I do not think that God ought to have laid, or indeed that conſiſtently he could have laid *ſuch* a Reſtraint upon Man's Will, as that his *Wickedneſs* ſhould not be able to fruſtrate the Meaſures of his Providence: But I ſay that *Originally*, and *in General*, the *End* and the *Means* muſt bear a due Proportion the one to the other, and therefore that it is not conſiſtent with the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, to give us *Paſſions*, and yet to deal with us as if we had *none*. Nor hath he thus dealt with us in other Caſes. We are *born* under the reſtraints of *Human Authority*; and the *Paternal Care* reaches to *Religion*, as well as to the *outward Decency* of Behaviour. Wherein lies the fitneſs of this Procedure? Why in this, that we are born *Weak* and *Paſſionate* Creatures: And do we *ceaſe* to be ſuch when we become *Men*? I ſhould be glad to find it; but if not, why muſt we preſently be let looſe from ALL Human Authority, when the Foundation of it (tho' in a leſſer Degree) continues to be the ſame? Again; Let us conſider how God hath dealt with

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with us as to the Affairs of this lower World. His Deſign in creating us (I take it for granted) was to make us Happy both here and hereafter. The Foundation of our *future* Happineſs is our Obedience to HIM, conſider'd as *his* Subjects; and the Foundation of our *preſent* Happineſs is the Obſervance of thoſe Rules which are proper to us as Creatures, dependent one upon another. Now pray what is the Method which God hath made Uſe of to lead us to this latter ſort of Happineſs? Hath he left us *merely* under the Influence of *Rational Motives?* No; He knew that he had given us *Paſſions* as well as *Reaſon*. He knew the Power of thoſe *Paſſions*, and foreſaw that had he left the Government of them *merely* to Reaſon, the World would ſoon have been in an Uproar; and Men would have worried and torn each other like ſo many Bears or Tygers. He hath therefore brought us under the Laws of the *Civil Magiſtrate*, whom he hath veſted with the Power of diſpenſing Rewards and Puniſhments; that by the Application of *preſent* Motives thoſe might be brought to Reaſon, who would otherwiſe act in Oppoſition to Reaſon. But is God think you more careful of our *Temporal* Happineſs, than of our *Eternal?* Hath he conſider'd our *Weakneſs* and *Depravity* in the one Caſe, and paid no Regard to it in the other? Hath he in the ſmalleſt Matters dealt with us according to what *we are*, and in the greateſt of all hath he dealt with us according to what we *are not?* I muſt alter my Notion of God e're I can believe it.

This, Reader, is what I have to offer, to ſhew that Religion is *directly* the Concern of the Civil Magiſtrate: Of how great weight it is I muſt leave to your Diſcretion. For my own

part

part I declare I ſee not any Thing that can be alledged againſt it, except it be this, That by this Method there is great Danger, leſt the Care of Religion ſhould fall into ill Hands, who inſtead of applying the Motives of this World on the ſide of Truth, ſhall make Uſe of them to ſubvert and deſtroy the Truth. Now this being our Adverſaries grand and capital Objection, and the *only* difficulty indeed that attends upon the Subject, I ſhall therefore be ſure not to overlook it. But becauſe it doth not relate purely to natural Religion, but alſo, and that moſt principally, to the Doctrines of Revelation; I think it will be more proper to defer the Conſideration of it till afterwards.

CHAP. III.

Of the Magiſtrates Right to encourage true Religion; wherein is ſhown, 2dly, *How this Right ſtands under the Goſpel Revelation.*

IT being clear then that the Magiſtrate has a Right to encourage true Religion, by and under, the Law of *Nature*; our next Buſineſs muſt be to conſider how the Caſe ſtands under the Light of *Revelation.* In purſuing which Point, I do not purpoſe to begin with the *Old* Teſtament; For that under the *Law* the Magiſtrate was by divine Appointment veſted with the Care of Religion is allowed on all Hands, and therefore there needs to be no Diſpute about it. But then they tell us that this was a Thing peculiar to the Legal Diſpenſation, which being entirely diſtinct from the Evangelical, there can there-

fore be no arguing from the one to the other. Now this I confeſs, that the Magiſtrates having a Right under the *Law* to take care of Religion, is of itſelf no direct Proof that ſuch a Right is alſo veſted in the *Chriſtian* Magiſtrate: But then I think alſo That is of great weight, conſidered as a collateral Evidence; and how far the Argument will go, I ſhall not forget to take Notice at a more proper Seaſon. At preſent I go to the *Goſpel*, and the Point is, Whether, as the Magiſtrate under the *Law* of *Nature*, has a Right to encourage Religion, as taught by the *Law* of *Nature*; ſo the Magiſtrate under the *Goſpel*, i. e. the *Chriſtian* Magiſtrate, has not alſo a Right to encourage Religion as taught by the *Goſpel*.

It has afore been obſerved, and I preſume it will readily be allowed, that what Right the Magiſtrate always had by the *Law* of *Nature*; the ſame Right and no other he has ſtill under the *Goſpel*, unleſs the Goſpel hath made any Difference. The Queſtion therefore is, Whether, ſo far as a *general* Right to encourage true Religion is concerned, the Goſpel hath made any Difference or not; and I beg leave to ſay it hath made none. For if there be any Difference, that Difference muſt ariſe from hence, *viz.* either, 1. That the Goſpel hath by ſome poſitive command prohibited the Chriſtian Magiſtrate to concern himſelf with it's Religion; or, 2. That in the Nature of the Thing, there is not the ſame Reaſon why the Chriſtian Magiſtrate ſhould concern himſelf with the Religion of the Goſpel; as there is that the Magiſtrate not Chriſtian ſhould concern himſelf with the Religion of Nature. If I ſay there be any Difference between theſe two Caſes, it muſt neceſſarily ſtand upon one or the other of theſe Foundations: For what

ſtronger

ſtronger Argument can you deſire to ſhew, That the Chriſtian Magiſtrate has a Right to encourage Chriſtianity than this, *viz.* That the Reaſon of the Thing enforceth it, and that the Goſpel forbids it not? Now that the Goſpel no where forbids the Chriſtian Magiſtrate to encourage Chriſtianity, muſt be evident to any one who has ever read the Goſpel; and whether it is reaſonable for him to do it, will eaſily appear by looking back to the Arguments that have been alledged in the foregoing Chapter, and conſidering whether what they infer with reſpect to *Natural* Religion, they do not infer with regard to *Revelation* alſo.

In examining this Point you may remember, that I argued firſt of all from the End of the Magiſtrates Office, conſider'd as he is the *Guardian* of the *publick Civil Good.* And under this Head I obſerved, That if it be the Buſineſs of the Magiſtrate to ſecure the Happineſs of Civil Societies; it muſt be his Buſineſs to ſecure the Practice of true Religion, upon which the Happineſs of Society neceſſarily depends; and that 1. as the Happineſs of Society has a neceſſary dependance upon the Behaviour of the Subject, upon which Religion, or the want of it, muſt always have a very ſenſible Influence; and, 2. as the Happineſs of Society is concerned in the Pleaſure or Diſpleaſure of Almighty God, who bleſſeth thoſe who pay a due Reverence to his Name, and frequently puniſheth whole Nations *for the Wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.* Now as to the firſt of theſe two Reaſons, it muſt be acknowledged, that *directly* and *immediately* it relates to the Principles of *Natural* Religion only; becauſe the Performance of *Natural Duties* i. e. the Duties of *Morality*, implies all that

good Behaviour which is neceſſary to the Being, or the Well-being of a Civil Society conſider'd as ſuch. It is not eſſential to the Being of Civil Government that the Members of it are Chriſtians; nor does a Man's Faith with reſpect to revealed Truths, render him a better Subject any otherwiſe than as it leads him to better *Manners*, i. e. as it makes him a more *Moral* Man. But true Morality may ſubſiſt in thoſe who have no Faith; and if it does, the *Habitude* which they bear to Civil Society (ſo far as this Reaſon carries us) will be the very ſame.

It is nevertheleſs proper to obſerve that tho' Moral Virtue may ſubſiſt even in thoſe who have no Faith; yet that Morality is *beſt* ſecured by the Religion of the Goſpel, the Precepts and Motives of which are by all acknowledged to be both an Improvement and an Enforcement of the Law of Nature: And by Conſequence that the Magiſtrate is ſtill concerned to take Care of Chriſtianity, if not for its own ſake, yet for the ſake and on the Account of Morality. And this I would have underſtood not only of Chriſtianity in general and at large; but of its particular Branches. For the whole ſubſiſts by its Parts, and whatever weakens or deſtroys one Article of Faith; has a manifeſt Tendency to weaken and deſtroy all the reſt. It muſt farther be obſerved, That there is no one Part of the Chriſtian Doctrine which does not one way or another, in a greater Degree or in a leſs, contribute towards the Advancement of Virtue and Piety. For either it is ſubſervient to ſome greater Point, upon which the Certainty of our Religion does more immediately depend: Either it directly points out to us our Duty, or adminiſters ſome Help to make the Performance of it more eaſy to us, or

furniſhes

furniſhes us with ſome wiſe and weighty Conſiderations, why we ought to be diligent and induſtrious in our Heavenly Calling. If there is room for any Exception in this Caſe; it ſhould ſeem to lye againſt the Poſitive Inſtitutions of the Goſpel. But we muſt not faſten ſo great a Reproach upon the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, as to ſuppoſe that theſe external Rites are uſeleſs, inſignificant, Ceremonies. We ſhould rather conſider them (for ſuch indeed they are) as proper Helps to the Infirmities of Fleſh and Blood, and as Inſtruments ordained by God to ſecure that inward eſſential Holineſs, which is the End of our Profeſſion. There is no need for me to enlarge upon theſe Points, becauſe they contain no more than what every Chriſtian I preſume will readily acknowledge, and what any Man of common Senſe may eaſily underſtand. I ſhall only remark that what is true of the Original and Standing Laws of rhe Goſpel, of which Chriſt himſelf is the immediate Author; is proportionably true of thoſe *By-Laws* (if I may ſo call them) relating to Order and Diſcipline, which are at any Time appointed by Perſons acting by Authority under him; the true Uſe whereof undoubtedly is, the ſecuring the Profeſſion of a Right Faith, and rhe Practice of an acceptable Obedience. So that upon the whole I cannot perceive, but that, in virtue of this firſt Reaſon, Chriſtianity, in the full Latitude wherein that Word may be underſtood, falls under the Magiſtrates Care, tho' in a more *remote indirect* Way.

But then, 2. As to the other of theſe two Reaſons, this (without any ſort of difference or diſtinction) holds in its full Force, as well with reſpect to *Revealed* as *Natural* Religion. For that which

God is here ſuppoſed to puniſh a Nation for, is the *wickedneſs* of the People; and Men may be *wicked* againſt a *Revealed* and *Poſitive*, as well as againſt a *Natural* and *Moral*, Law. I do not ſay that every one who disbelieves any Goſpel Doctrine, or who doth not comply with every Goſpel Inſtitution is a wicked Man; becauſe there is ſuch a Thing as a pityable ignorance or innocent Miſtake. But ſurely all thoſe who either *careleſly neglect* or *wilfully contemn* the Goſpel, or any Part of it are wicked Men: And ſuch Wickedneſs, no leſs than direct Violations of *natural* Duties, calls for the Vengeance of God, who expects to be heard in whatever he commands, and will not in any Caſe ſuffer his Authority to be vilified and ſet at Naught. The Chriſtian Magiſtrate therefore, as he tenders the Publick Civil Good, is at leaſt ſo far concerned to take Care of Chriſtianity, as to provide as much as in him lies, that no Man lightly departs from it. But above all things he ſhould take care by all proper Methods to reſcue it from the *Inſults* of the *Profane* and *Licentious*; which Impiety if he *dares* not ſuppreſs, it ſhews his Authority to be in a very low and deſperate Condition; or if he *will* not, it argues a Degree of Degeneracy in him not to be forgiven. This Right or rather *Duty*, is farther enforced by this Conſideration, *viz.* That the ſame Depravity of Mind, which leads Men to this Wickedneſs, has a natural Tendency to lead them to other Enormities, which have a more direct Influence upon Civil Society. He who contemns the Laws of Revealed Religion, is in a fit Diſpoſion to break in upon the Laws of Natural Religion; for the ſame Authority which ſupports the one ſupports the other. And in all Caſes it will be found true, that unleſs the Magiſtrate takes

care

care to ſecure the Authority of God, he will never be able to ſecure his own.

By what *Criterion* we may oft times diſtinguiſh a *wilful Contempt* of the Goſpel Doctrines, from *involuntary Ignorance*, ſhall be conſidered afterwards. At preſent I am only ſtating the Point in general; and therefore think it ſufficient juſt to mention many Things, which will be very properly enlarged upon, when we come to examine into the particulars of the Magiſtrates Authority. In general then I think it plain, from the Reaſon now inſiſted upon, that the Chriſtian Magiſtrate has to do with Chriſtianity conſider'd, as he is the *Guardian* of the *Publick* Civil *Good:* And there is beſides theſe which I have mentioned, another Way by which the Magiſtrate, under this Capacity, may accidentally be concerned to take Care of Chriſtianity (to wit, as the Oppoſing and Defending Chriſtianity or Part of it, may be the Occaſion of ſuch Heats and Animoſities between the contending Parties, as may endanger the Publick Safety) which I ſhall ſpeak to in another Place. But foraſmuch (as has been ſhewn) the Publick Civil Good is not the *ſole* End of the Magiſtrates Office, which has alſo a *direct immediate* Regard to Religion; let us ſee, what farther help this Conſideration will afford us. To me then the Argument is clear and unexceptionable, That if the Magiſtrate has a Right to take Care of Natural Religion merely becauſe it is Religion (which is what this way of Reaſoning ſuppoſes,) it will follow, that he is concerned to take Care of any Poſitive Law or Inſtitution, when in virtue of the Divine Authority enjoyning or commanding it, it comes to be Religion. This I ſay, muſt be the Conſequence upon Suppoſition that it be needful, that ſuch Divine Poſitive

Laws or Inſtitutions be ſupported, and encouraged by Human Authority. Now the *Reaſons* by which I have endeavoured to ſhew, that it is *needful* for the Magiſtrate to take Care of Religion under the Law of Nature, are 1ſt, That otherwiſe there would be a great want of able and ſufficient Teachers to Inſtruct Men in the Knowledge of their Duties; and 2dly, a want alſo of proper and ſuitable Motives to engage them both to attend upon Inſtruction, and to act according to what they underſtand. Let us proceed then in the Method in which we have begun, and ſee whether theſe Reaſons will not as well hold under the Chriſtian Revelation. And,

1. As to the Argument drawn from the Neceſſity and Want of Teachers, this concludes more ſtrongly with reſpect to Chriſtianity, in proportion as the Doctrines of Morality (which are only the Dictates of Natural Reaſon,) are more eaſily learned than the Doctrines of Revelation; or in propotion as it is more difficult to diſcharge the Office of a *Chriſtian Teacher*, than of a mere *Heathen Philoſopher*. The Office of a Goſpel Miniſter (as it now is and has been for many Ages backward) is to defend Chriſtianity againſt the Attacks of Atheiſts and Infidels; to explain the Doctrines of the Goſpel; to vindicate its true and genuine Senſe againſt thoſe falſe Interpretations, which have been introduced either by Deſign or Ignorance; and by ſerious and frequent Admonitions to inforce and inculcate its Precepts upon the Minds of Men. So that this appears at firſt ſight to be a Work full of Labour and Difficulty; a Work which requires a good Underſtanding, great Diſcretion and Diligence; a Work which we muſt be prepared for at firſt by a liberal and learned Education,

and

and which muſt be carried on under a Courſe of Life exempted, as much as may be, from the Cares and Incumberances of Worldly Buſineſs. Now let any one ſit down and conſider with himſelf, whether the bare Proſpect of doing good, would generally ſpeaking (or indeed in any tolerable Meaſure) be a ſufficient inducement for Men at great Expence and Trouble to qualify themſelves for an Imployment, which debars them of all other Methods, of making even a decent Proviſion for themſelves. For my own Part, I ſee little Reaſon to expect it. For tho' 'tis mean and wicked for a Man to propoſe nothing by his entring upon the Work of the Miniſtry, *but* the getting of a Livelyhood (which is to turn Religion into a *Trade*;) yet I hope the getting a Livelyhood *by* and *under* an honeſt and faithful diſcharge of this Office, is no unreaſonable Expectation; eſpecially ſince, as the Apoſtle tells us, *God hath ordained that they who preach the Goſpel ſhould alſo Live of the Goſpel.* When a Parent ſends his Son from School to the Univerſity with an Intention to bring him up for Holy Orders, what does he propoſe? Why if he has any Conſcience, he propoſes to make him an Inſtrument in the hand of God for advancing his Honour. But if he has any Senſe he does not lay out that Money, which would have qualified him for the Exerciſe of ſome honeſt Calling, under a View, that having once furniſhed himſelf with a ſufficient ſtock of Learning and Knowledge, he may (as a trial of his Virtue) be afterwards ſent Abroad to ſtarve for his Pains. The Work of Inſtruction therefore can never effectually be carried on, unleſs a competent Proviſion be made for the Maintenance and Encouragement of Publick Teachers. And how ſhall this be ſecured? Why

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by the Interpoſition of the Civil Magiſtrate or not at all. True indeed it is that the Goſpel itſelf, hath thus far provided for the Maintenance of it's Teachers; as to have made it the Duty of thoſe, *who receive from them ſpiritual Things, to miniſter unto them carnal Things.* But this is only a general Law; and our Adverſaries, I preſume, are none of thoſe who think that there is any Law of God now in Force, which determines the exact Proportion that every Congregation ſhall allow to it s Paſtor. I am rather apt to fancy that ſo zealous Defenders of Civil Right and Property, will be as tender of Men's Purſes, as they pretend to be of their Conſciences; and as they have granted them full Licence to believe what they pleaſe, will alſo give them leave to pay what they pleaſe: Upon which Foot the Teachers Allowance will be either ſufficient or not ſufficient, juſt as his Hearers are, liberally or not liberally, diſpoſed, or according as they like or diſlike his Doctrines; which many times, by how much the better they are, by ſo much the worſe they will be received. Beſides if there were any Divine Law which determined the exact Proportion of every Teachers Allowance, this would make (I fear) but ſmall Alteration in the Caſe, unleſs the Church had a Power to enforce this Law by Temporal Penalties. For what if the People ſhould refuſe to do what the Goſpel commands? Muſt the Miniſter be left to feed upon the Air without Remedy, till he can preach them into a Senſe of their Duty? Why yes; For the Church is ſuppoſed to have no power to inflict Temporal Penalties, and 'tis certain that ſhe has none. So that if the Magiſtrate in virtue of his Office inflicts none neither; it will be a Law without a Penalty, and

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be uſed as ſuch Laws are always uſed, *i. e.* obſerved or not obſerved, according to Diſcretion.

And where would be the Harm, perhaps you'll ſay, if Miniſters were left to depend for their Maintenance upon the Diſcretion of their Hearers? Was not this in Fact the Caſe for the firſt 300 Years? Yes; and the firſt Preachers of the Goſpel, we know, *laboured with their Hands*; but has this ever been thought a fit Example for after Ages to follow? The Point is not what was once ſufficient upon a particular extraordinary Occaſion; but what is and will be neceſſary, ordinarily and in the general Courſe of the World. The firſt Believers *had all things in Common*, for we read, that *as many as were Poſſeſſors of Lands or Houſes ſold them, and brought the Prices of them, and laid them at the Apoſtles Feet*: which is juſt as good an Argument againſt Civil Property among Chriſtians, as the other is againſt a ſtanding and ſettled Maintenance for Paſtors. But this continued but for a little Time, and whilſt the Number of Chriſtians was comparatively but ſmall: Yet ſtill there remained a great Spirit of Zeal and Devotion, both in the Teachers and in the Hearers; by which it came to paſs, that the one were leſs deſirous to receive, whilſt at the ſame Time, the other were more ready to give. But in proportion as the Heat of Men's Zeal began to abate, (which in all Religions is always greateſt at it's firſt ſpringing up) there were larger Demands on the one Hand, and leſs Supplies on the other: which was the Reaſon that when Chriſtianity became the Religion of the Empire, and the Multitude of Believers incomparably greater; the firſt Chriſtian Emperors found it immediately neceſſary to ſupply the Defect of voluntary Oblations by legal Proviſions.

ſions. In ſhort, Whatever was then wanting to the Church of *external* Supports, was abundantly made up by the *internal* Gifts and Graces of God's Spirit, as I ſhall have occaſion to obſerve more fully by and by. In the mean while, I think I may truſt the Point in general with any Man of common Obſervation: Let him only caſt his Eyes about him and conſider, how Mankind is now for the moſt part diſpoſed. That which he will take Notice of, I conceive, is this; That if any thing conſiderable is advanced in the way of vuluntary Contribution, it is amongſt thoſe whom *Faction* hath ſpirited up amongſt an *Eſtabliſhment*; or in *Popiſh* Countries, where People are gull'd out of their Money by the pious Frauds of Prieſts; *Indulgencies*, *Relicks*, *Pilgrimages*, Stories of *Purgatory*, and I know not what. But how ſtands the Caſe among Proteſtants in this Reſpect, and particularly among ourſelves? Has their having received the true Faith enlarged their Bowels towards thoſe thro' whoſe Miniſtry they have received it? Are they ſo much the more Liberal, by how much they are the more Sound? Or rather, have they not almoſt loſt their Zeal along with their Superſtition? How ſome may have found it I cannot ſay; But, I believe, except it be here and there in Rich and Populous Places, few feel the Benefit of any Thing more than what the Law allows them; and even this is very frequently not to be obtained without much Difficulty. This ſhews how hopeful a Condition the Clergy would be in, if they had no better Security to rely upon than the mere Courteſy of their Pariſhioners: And doubtleſs it was from this Knowledge of Mankind, that all Chriſtian Magiſtrates in the World, have thought it requiſite to take them under

their Protection; and to aſcertain that by Law, which without Law they would have been obliged to have asked, and, what is worſe might have asked in vain.

'Tis eaſy then to ſee, what would be the Conſequence if this Method were laid aſide; to wit, That inſtead of a ſufficient Number of able and learned Men to vindicate, explain, and inculcate God's Word; there would in proceſs of Time be a greater ſcarcity of Teachers; and that theſe few would generally be of the Meaner and more Ignorant ſort: Men whoſe Circumſtances, and want of Education would afford them no better Proſpect than the ſcanty Allowance of a Congregation. And as the Age grew more degenerate, the Evil would increaſe; ſo that in proportion as the Church would want a better ſupply of this ſort, it would in Fact be ſupplyed much worſe: the Conſequence of which in Time muſt be an univerſal Ignorance and Depravity of Manners. We may write and preach to the End of our Days, but Men will ſtill be Men: And ſo long as they are ſo, it will always be found true, that where there is no Encouragement given to Learning, Ignorance will follow; and that a poor Benefice and a mean Paſtor commonly go together. I have been informed that the Biſhops in *Wales* out of mere Neceſſity are obliged to confer holy Orders upon many, who beſides their Sobriety, have little elſe to recommend them than a good Knowledge of their Mother Tongue. Now were the Cauſe univerſal, the Effect would be ſo too: And what a notable Bulwark againſt Popery the Church of *England* would be, I leave every ſerious Perſon to conſider.

But

But what is all this to us ſay our Adverſaries, who do not (*f*) *argue againſt the Maintenance and Support of thoſe who officiate in the Churches or Aſſemblies of Chriſtians?* With all my Heart: Truth is ſo rare a Thing amongſt them, that I ſhall always be glad to accept of it whereſoever I find it, even upon their own Terms. And therefore if they will ſpeak out and tell us plainly, not only that the Preachers of Chriſtianity have a Right to be maintained, but alſo that the Chriſtian Magiſtrate hath a Right to aſcertain that Maintenance; I am very free to diſcharge them of the Conſequence. But then they will excuſe me, I hope, if from this Point thus allowed I endeavour to ſhew them the falſhood of their Principles. If the Magiſtrate has a Right to ſupport the *Preachers* of Chriſtianity; he muſt have a Right to Support Chriſtianity itſelf: For a Right to the Means, always implies a Right to the End. But if what they ſay on the other ſide be true, that the Magiſtrate hath nothing to do with *Religion*; 'tis certain that he can have nothing to do with the *Chriſtian* Religion: The Conſequence of which is, that his appointing a Maintenance for a Chriſtian Teacher in every Pariſh, is as great a Breach of his Truſt, as would be his ſettling a Stipend for the Maintenance of a Muſick or a Dancing-Maſter. This is ſo clear a Caſe, that one would think it were next to impoſſible that any one ſhould miſtake it: And therefore I cannot help vehemently ſuſpecting, that by this *not arguing againſt the Maintenance and Support of thoſe who officiate in the Churches or Aſſemblies of Chriſtians*; a great

(*f*) Letter to Dr. *Snape*, p. 44.

deal

deal leſs is intended than what the Author perhaps would be willing enough to have underſtood. By the *Churches* or *Aſſemblies* of Chriſtians may be meant *Churches* or *Conventicles*, i. e. the Aſſemblies of all thoſe who go under the general Denomination of Chriſtians, whether they preach the Goſpel or their own Inventions. And it is not ſaid of any particular ſort of Teachers, that *the Magiſtrate* has a *Right* to appoint them a Maintenance; but of all in general that they *ſhould be* maintained, which (for ought appears) leaves them all alike to the Courteſie of their reſpective Congregations. Indeed I can ſee no great Reaſon why HE ſhould be at all ſollicitous about a Maintenance for Teachers, who thinks (g) *Learning* to be ſo *needleſs* and *uſeleſs* a Thing towards leading Men to a right Judgment in Points of Religion; as that, *one honeſt illiterate Man* ſhall be able to do as much as *all the learned Men of a* Nation *met together in a general Council.* If this I ſay be right; the Teachers of Chriſtianity have little to do; and the Magiſtrate may much better employ the Publick Stock, than by appointing them a Subſiſtence. Let the Cobler go forth from his Hovel, and the Butcher from his Stall, and exerciſe their Gifts before any Congregation that will be willing to admit of them. As they like, ſo let them pay, and the leſs the better: For I am truly of Opinion that the very leaſt they can give will be too good a Reward for ſuch Qualifications. But to proceed,

2. To the other Argument which is drawn from the want of ſeaſonable and proper *Motives*,

(g) Anſw. to the Repreſentation, *p.* 98.

to

to engage Men to attend upon Inſtruction, and to act according to what they underſtand; which holds alſo with reſpect to Chriſtianity tho' in a lower Degree. The Goſpel as I ſaid before, gives us a more firm Aſſurance of the Rewards of a Life to come, than the Law of Nature doth: It alſo furniſhes us with more and greater internal Helps, than the Law of Nature can. But in plain Terms hath it not left us ſtill Men, *i. e.* ſubject to thoſe carnal Luſts and Appetites, which war againſt Reaſon, and are apt to lead us to a Behaviour unworthy of ourſelves? If it does; human Methods are ſtill neceſſary: Nor ſhould we be ſo unmindful of our own Weakneſs, as to neglect the Uſe of worldly Motives on the one Hand; ſo long as there are worldly Motives to encounter on the other. Nor is this any Diminution of the Excellency of the Goſpel; how forward ſoever ſome may have been to repreſent it as ſuch. For Religion is not therefore the leſs excellent, becauſe the Corruption and Depravity of Mankind is greater. Chriſtianity has enough in it to recommend it to the Choice of all reaſonable Men; even tho' all the Powers of the Earth ſhould Riſe up againſt it: For the Rewards which it propoſeth in a Life to come, being infinitely preferable to all the Advantages we can reap in this; it muſt therefore be a thing infinitely more reaſonable to renounce the latter for the ſake of the former, than the former for the ſake of the latter. But yet if in this degenerate State of the World, Mankind are diſpoſed to Act unreaſonably, and the prevalency of their fleſhly Appetites ſhall at any time take them off from being duly affected, with the Diſproportion that there is between Earthly Things and Heavenly; evident it is that theſe

Motives

Motives muſt then looſe their Effect: For that which influences Men's Actions is not the real intrinſick Value of Things, but the Place which they have in the Eſteem and Opinion of thoſe who apply themſelves to judge of, and conſider them. 'Tis therefore, I ſay, no Diminution to Chriſtianity that the Motives of this World are neceſſary to give weight to it's Precepts. For this Neceſſity ariſes not from hence, that it's own Motives are not of themſelves ſufficient if they be rated according to their true Value: But the Caſe is, that Mankind, thro' their great proneneſs to ſenſual Things, being apt to undervalue them; it is therefore needful to make uſe of other Motives which tho' infinitely leſs in themſelves, are yet more adapted to their preſent corrupted State and Condition.

But here again I expect to be told of the *flouriſhing Eſtate* of the Chriſtian Church during the firſt 300 Years; not only without, but in Oppoſition to thoſe worldly Motives, the Needfulneſs of which is now inſiſted upon: Nor am I in the leaſt afraid of the Objection, which, let our Adverſaries make the moſt of they are able, will yield them nothing. For what do they mean by the *flouriſhing* Eſtate of Chriſtianity? Flouriſhing indeed it was, if you conſider only the Purity of the Faith then profeſſed, and the Piety and Conſtancy of it's Profeſſors. But he that ſhall ſay that had the Rulers of this World immediately bowed down their Necks to the Son of God, and the Motives of this World been added to the Motives of another; that is, that if all thoſe Impediments had from the very firſt been removed which alone hinder'd the Progreſs of the Goſpel, the Number of good Chriſtians would not have been incomparably

greater, and ſo Chriſtianity have in this Senſe (which is the Senſe to be regarded in this Queſtion) flouriſhed more within that Period of Time than it did; He I ſay who ſhall pretend to this, deſerves rather to be pitied than refuted. But it pleaſed God for wiſe Reaſons of Providence that his Church ſhould be founded in Sufferings, and the Faith of his Son ariſe out of ſmall Beginnings. *Small* I ſay, for very ſmall was the Number of good Chriſtians, tho' not comparatively to the Body of Profeſſors, yet comparatively to the Number of thoſe to whom the preaching of the Goſpel came. And it ought to be remarked that even to the gathering together this ſmall Number; even to this flouriſhing State of the Church, many Circumſtances concurr'd which are not common to theſe latter Ages. The Miracles which were wrought by the Power, and in the Name of Jeſus, were either before their Eyes, or within the Memory of thoſe who had been Eye Witneſſes of them. At leaſt the Fame of them had paſſed thro' ſo few Hands, that there was no room for thoſe Cavils, which in Caſes of this ſort, Length of Time naturally makes way for: And there was moreover a moſt plentiful Communication of the Divine Spirit, thro' which with more than a Human Power, the Faith of Chriſt triumphed over the World and all its Temptations. In a Word; there are viſible Marks of an extraordinary Interpoſition of the Almighty Hand of God to ſupport his Infant Church: And tho' I doubt not but the ſame Power would again interpoſe in the ſame manner, if there ſhould be the ſame Occaſion; yet ſince there is no ſuch Occaſion (*Kings* being now become our *nurſing Fathers, and Queens our nurſing Mothers*;) As we have

have no Reaſon to think that God does now vouchſafe the ſame Aſſiſtance; ſo 'tis little better than tempting him to quarrel at thoſe Methods of his Providence, by which, in an ordinary Way, he is pleaſed to miniſter to our Infirmities. Beſides; If this Objection prove any thing it is, that Chriſtianity flouriſhes beſt under *Perſecution*; for this was the Caſe for the greater Part of the firſt 300 Years. May we not then as well argue from hence, that in order to advance Chriſtianity it were a good way to bring in Perſecution? But of the falſhood of this, *Mahometiſm* has afforded us a ſad and lamentable Inſtance, which by the Power of the Sword hath even extinguiſhed Chriſtianity in thoſe Parts where once it ſhone in its brighteſt Glory. And if the ſame Method had every where been uſed, the ſame Effect (without the miraculous Interpoſition of Providence) would every where have followed. So vain a thing is it for Men to argue from particular extraordinary Caſes what is proper in the general Courſe of the World!

Thus I have gone through thoſe ſeveral Reaſons, by which it has been ſhewn, that the Care of Religion belongs to the Civil Magiſtrate under the Law of *Nature*; and you ſee plainly that in a greater or leſſer Degree, they all of them hold with reſpect to Chriſtianity. Now to all that has been offered upon this Subject, it will ſerve (as I ſaid before) as a good collateral Evidence to conſider, in what manner God was heretofore pleaſed to deal with his People the *Jews*. It is a very ſtrong Preſumption concerning Religion in general, that it is the proper Object of the Magiſtrates Care, that in the only Commonwealth which was of God's own immediate Appointment, the Care of Religion was

committed to the Magiſtrate: And the Law of *Moſes* being a divine Revelation, as well as the Law of *Jeſus Chriſt*; this ſhows that Religion is not *therefore* an improper Object of the Magiſtrates Concern *becauſe* it is Revealed. But if any ſhould ſay that there is ſomething peculiar in each Revelation, which makes the Interpoſition of the Magiſtrate fitting as to the one, but not ſo as to the other; it will be proper that they tell us alſo what that is: And the moſt that I have ever heard of the Matter amounts to this, *viz.* That the Law of *Moſes* was a Law not of *Religion* only, but of *Civil Government* alſo, and that the Security of the *Jewiſh* Nation conſider'd as a *Body Politick*, was made to depend entirely upon the Obſervance of it; which is true. But the Obſervation I think advances nothing. For this is the very Queſtion that I would ask, *viz.* How it came to paſs that under the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation the Law of Religion and Civil Government ſhould be both *one*; and that under the *Goſpel*, Religion and Civil Government ſhould have nothing to do the one with the other. The *End* both of the *Law* and of the *Goſpel* was ultimately the ſame, to wit, the leading Men to the Worſhip of the true God. As a Motive to this the one propoſes a *temporal*, the other an *eternal* Inheritance. Now from this Diverſity of the Motive under each Diſpenſation this Difference indeed muſt neceſſarily ariſe; that there is no farther need of the Promiſe of an *Earthly* Canaan, the *Heavenly* being ſo fully and ſo clearly Revealed. But pray let us conſider this one Point: Was the propoſing the *Land* of *Canaan* as the Reward of their Obedience, the *only* Method which God made uſe of to keep the *Jews* ſtedfaſt in their Duty? 'Tis granted it

was

was not. For he brought them under the conſtant reſtraint of the Civil Magiſtrate, and by this Means ſo link't their Obedience even with their *preſent* Good, that there could be no ſuch thing as departing from the one, without forfeiting the other. And what was the Reaſon of this Procedure? Why plainly this, becauſe they were always prone to Rebel. The Promiſe was at a diſtance, and ſo proper to influence them conſider'd only as reaſonable Creatures. Luſt and Paſſion in the mean while were importunate, and a preſent Diſeaſe call'd for a preſent Remedy. And is then this *New* Diſpenſation, a Diſpenſation of leſs *Wiſdom* and *Mercy* than the *Old*? Hath God ſet before us a *Heavenly* Canaan ſuited only to the Nature of Angels, and at a much greater diſtance from *us* than the *Land* of *Promiſe* was from the *Jews*; and hath he made no proviſion for our *preſent* Needs, conſidered as we are Fleſh and Blood? The Goſpel indeed as it hath alſo brought in a *better Hope*, ſo it hath alſo brought in a better Nature: But as I ſaid before, it leaves us ſtill Men, and it is plain that we want to be dealt with as ſuch. Let us not then think ſo unworthily of the All-wiſe Governour of the World, as to ſuppoſe that in a Matter of ſo much Conſequence as that of our everlaſting Intereſt, he makes uſe of Means diſproportionate to the End; nor impute that Weakneſs to him which we ſhould blame in an earthly Parent, who in order to make the Child whom he loves Dutiful and Obedient, ſhould think it enough to give him the Promiſe of an Eſtate in reverſion, leaving him all the while expoſed to the Follies and Extravagancies of Youth, and taking no Care to guard him againſt thoſe Temptations, which by leading him into

evil Courſes will cauſe him to fall ſhort of his Inheritance.

But if this be the Caſe, you will ask how happens it that the Goſpel has no where given any expreſs Directions to Chriſtian Magiſtrates, to make uſe of their Authority towards the ſupport of its Precepts. To which I anſwer in general that there was no Occaſion for it. The Goſpel has introduced nothing New in this particular; and therefore there was no Neceſſity of any New Injunctions to be added to the Old. 'Tis true the Goſpel is in many Caſes no leſs expreſs and particular in enforcing Old Laws than in preſcribing New: For of this ſort are all the Laws of Morality, the Rules or Directions concerning which do nevertheleſs make up one very conſiderable Part of the ſacred Writings. So that if you ſhould ſtill think fit to urge, Why amongſt all theſe Directions there are none to the Magiſtrate, to employ his Authority in the Defence of Chriſtianity; it may not be altogether improper to obſerve, that the Right of the Magiſtrate to take care of Religion was a Point generally well underſtood; and that the deſign of the Goſpel was not to give a compleat Syſtem of Morality (which was not wanting;) but to enliven thoſe Parts of the Univerſal Law of Nature, the Traces of which were almoſt worn out; and to enforce thoſe Duties in the practice whereof Mankind were obſerved to be moſt defective. 'Tis upon this Account that the Duties of *Sobriety* and *Purity* are every where very earneſtly inſiſted upon, whilſt others are only juſt toucht *accidentally* as it were, and upon Occaſion. For here it was that Luſt and Paſſion had made the greateſt Havock both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*: Here alſo the ſtrongeſt

Fence

Fence was neceſſary with reſpect to the Chriſtians of thoſe Times, and of the Ages to come: The Pleaſures of *Intemperance* and *Senſuality*, being thoſe which Men are carried to with the quickeſt Appetite, from which good Men are preſerved always with ſome Difficulty, and bad Men recall'd with infinitely more. But in the exerciſe of *Power* and *Dominion* there is ſomething which gratifies the Paſſions; and tho' there is Room enough for neglect in Magiſtrates, they have certainly a great deal leſs need to be put in mind of their Duty in thoſe Points in which their Authority is concerned, than in others, where the Obligation is common both to their Subjects and to themſelves.

This, I humbly conceive, is no uſeleſs Obſervation: But the principal Reaſon why Magiſtrates are no where in the Goſpel expreſly and particularly enjoyned to concern themſelves with Religion, ſeems to be this, That when the Goſpel was firſt promulged there were no *Chriſtian* Magiſtrates; nor were there in the Order of Providence to be any ſuch for ſome Hundreds of Years after. To have exhorted the *Jewiſh* or the *Heathen* Magiſtrates to encourage Chriſtianity, when as yet they were not Chriſtians themſelves, had been abſurd: To have exhorted them to encourage their own Religion in oppoſition to Chriſtianity had been yet more ſo: What room was there then for the giving of a Law, when there were none in Being by which that Law could be put in Execution? But the Law you will ſay might have been made *de futuro*; i. e. the Goſpel might have expreſly and particularly enjoined, that when the Magiſtrates of any Nation *ſhould* become Chriſtians, they ſhould make uſe of their Authority to ſupport

and encourage Chriſtianity. It *might* ſo without doubt, but there are two Reaſons to be given why it was not to be expected: The one is that it was not at all *natural*, and the other that upon ſome Accounts neither was it *proper*. As to the firſt be pleaſed to conſider the Nature of thoſe Writings, which make up the ſacred Volume of the *New Teſtament*; part whereof are *Hiſtorical*, and contain the moſt remarkable Paſſages of the Life and Converſation of Chriſt and his Apoſtles; and part *Monitory*, conſiſting of *Epiſtles* occaſionally written to particular Churches or particular Perſons. Now what wonder is it that in the whole Narrative of the Four Evangeliſts and of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, we meet with no Directions given to Magiſtrates, when neither Chriſt nor his Apoſtles had any Converſation with ſuch? The ſhort Period of our bleſſed Saviour's Miniſtry was employ'd not among the Great and Mighty Men of this World, who he knew were in no Condition to receive his Doctrine; but among the Poor and the Humble, to whom it would have been to little purpoſe to have diſcourſed concerning the Right and Authority of Princes. The Caſe was the ſame as to the Apoſtles: They were Subjects themſelves, and had to do only with thoſe of the ſame Rank and Quality; who therefore were to be inſtructed not how to rule, but how to obey. Rather there was more need to tell them how to become good Chriſtians than good Subjects; for in this latter Point the firſt Converts were not wont to be defective. And hence doubtleſs it is that the Duty even of Subjects is in the New Teſtament ſo ſparingly inſiſted upon, and that the Office of the Magiſtrate is but

once

once or twice (*b*) pointed at, and that occaſionally, as it contained the Reaſon and Foundation of the other. The firſt, I ſay, *comparatively* or with reſpect to other Matters in which Chriſtians were more prone to offend, was little wanting; and the laſt (in the way of direct Precept) would have been unnatural. For to whom ſhould theſe Directions about the Magiſtrates Office have been given? Not to the People whom they did not concern: Not to the Magiſtrate himſelf who as yet was no Chriſtian, nor ever like to be ſo. Give me leave now to make good what I obſerved alſo before, that the giving Laws *de futuro* concerning what the Magiſtrate ſhould do in Caſe he became a Chriſtian, would have been improper as well as unnatural. For it was intended by Providence (for wiſe and good Reaſons without queſtion) that the Infant Church of Chriſt ſhould be under the diſcouragement of the Civil Magiſtrate, and ſuffer Perſecution. This is what our Saviour was very careful to inculcate upon the Minds of his Followers. He told them that they muſt *be brought before Kings and Rulers for his Names ſake*; and ſeems induſtriouſly to have avoided ſaying any thing, which might lead them to expect any good Fruit from being his Diſciples, but what was reſerved for them in his own *i. e.* in the Heavenly Kingdom, that they might not be unprepared for thoſe Tryals whereunto he had appointed them. To have told them therefore, that the Magiſtrate ſhould hereafter become Chriſtian, and encourage his Doctrines by the exerciſe of Civil Authority; what elſe would it

(*b*) Rom. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 13.

have

have been, but to have raiſed in them thoſe Hopes, which (as it now appears) he had no mind they ſhould entertain? And where could be the Propriety of giving Rules to them concerning the State of a Caſe, which was not to happen in their Days, nor in the Days of many Generations to come? Had it been the Buſineſs of Chriſt and his Apoſtles to have given an exact and particular Account of the State of the Church in future Times; we might then have expected to have found as plain Directions in what ſort Chriſtian Magiſtrates were to behave themſelves. But of this there is every where a profound Silence: And ſo far was our Lord from encouraging any Inquiries of this ſort, that when his Diſciples after his Reſurrection (ſtill leaning to the Hopes of worldly Proſperity and Grandure) ask't him, *Lord wilt thou at this time reſtore again the Kingdom to Iſrael*; he check't their forwardneſs with this Rebuke, *it is not for you to know the Times or the Seaſons which the Father hath put in his own Power*, Act. i. 6, 7.

To conclude all; the Writings of the New Teſtament were never intended to be a compleat and exact Syſtem either of Religion or Civil Polity. They are Books adapted to a particular Time and particular Occaſions; and it ſufficiently anſwers the End of their Compoſure, if they furniſh us with general Rules proper to direct the Faith, and regulate the Behaviour of Chriſtians. And if a general Rule will ſatisfy in this Caſe; permit me to ſay, that the Apoſtles St. *Paul* and St. *Peter*, (if you are willing to hear them) have given us a very plain one in the Places juſt now referr'd to; where we are told by the former, that the Magiſtrate *is the Miniſter of God for good* on the one hand, and *a Revenger to execute Wrath*

upon

upon him that doth Evil on the other: And by the latter (exactly to the ſame Senſe) that he is appointed *for the Puniſhment of Evil doers, and for the Praiſe,* (*i. e.* the Reward) *of them that do Well.* I know well enough our Adverſaries will reply, that the *Good* and *Evil* here ſpoken of muſt be underſtood not in a *Religious* but in a *Civil* Senſe. But this is purely Arbitrary. The Text it is plain makes no ſuch Diſtinction; and as to the Reaſon of the thing, it lies (as I hope I have ſufficiently ſhewn) full againſt it. But how hard ſoever it may be to reſolve how it came to paſs, that the Scriptures ſhould have given no particular Direction to Chriſtian Magiſtrates to take Care of Chriſtianity, ſuppoſing it to be the Will of God that they *ſhould* take Care of it; One Thing I am ſure there is much harder of which it concerns not *us*, but thoſe who oppoſe us ſeriouſly to conſider; and that is, How it happened (ſuppoſing what they ſay to be true, that Chriſtian Magiſtrates have *nothing to do* with Chriſtianity,) that they were not expreſly *forbidden* to concern themſelves with it. This I ſay is a much harder Queſtion to be reſolved than the other. For in our way of reckoning, the Goſpel has introduced nothing new as to this particular; and therefore, as we ſaid before, there was no need of any new Injunctions. But in their way, the Office of the Magiſtrate now under the Goſpel, differs from what it was at leaſt *apprehended* to be under the Law of *Nature*; and from what it moſt certainly *was* under the Law of *Moſes*. There never was yet any Government in the World, ſo far as the Records of paſt Ages will carry us; in which the Care of Religion was not eſteemed to be a principal Branch of the Magiſtrates Office. Now this

this Notion was either right or it was wrong. If you ſay it was right; you ſay what we ſay, who thence conclude that it is ſo ſtill, becauſe the Goſpel has made no Difference. If you ſay it was wrong; the Miſtake was certainly of too great Conſequence not to have been taken Notice of when the Goſpel was promulged; eſpecially conſidering that God himſelf had given the greateſt Countenance poſſible to this Miſtake (as it is now ſuppoſed to be) by committing the Care of the *Jewiſh* Religion to the *Jewiſh* Magiſtrate. Is there any thing then in the Writings of the New Teſtament which tends to ſhew us, that the Magiſtrate has nothing to do with Religion? Not a Syllable; Tho' 'tis obvious to take Notice, that the Apoſtles (to ſay nothing of our Saviour himſelf) if they had believed any ſuch Thing, had the propereſt Occaſions in the World to have ſaid ſo. When according to their Maſters Prediction they were *brought before Rulers and Kings for the ſake* of his Goſpel, it had been impertinent to have told them (which yet our Adverſaries ſeem to think, if our Principles be true, they ought to have told them) that they acknowledged their Authority, and expected they ſhould make uſe of it not againſt, but for Chriſtianity, when they themſelves ſhould become Chriſtians. But if what *they* ſay be true, and the Apoſtles had *denyed* their Authority, nothing could have been ſo proper as to have pleaded *coram non Judice*; which yet we do not find that they ever did. No; the *Authority* was always ſubmitted to; and the Defence put upon the *Righteouſneſs* of the *Cauſe*; and the Neceſſity they were under of *obeying God rather than Man*. Look but to the latter End of the *Acts* of the *Apoſtles*, and you will

will find an Inſtance home to the Purpoſe. At *Chap.* 23. we read of St. *Paul*'s being brought before *Felix* the *Roman* Governour. His Indictment as laid by *Tertullus* (Chap. 24. Verſes 5. 6.) was this, That he was a *peſtilent Fellow*; *a Mover of Sedition among the* Jews; *a Ringleader of the Sect of the Nazarens*, and a *Profaner of the Temple*. The Crimes objected, you ſee, were partly of a *Civil* and partly of a *Religious* Nature: And how does the Apoſtle defend himſelf? Why the Charge of *Sedition* he utterly denies, and puts it upon his Adverſaries to prove, (*Verſes* 12. 13, 18, 19, 20.) The Charge of his being a Chriſtian, and preaching the Doctrine of the *Reſurrection* he confeſſes, and ſhews the Reaſons of his being ſo. (*Verſes* 14, 15, 21, 24, 25, 26.) His Conduct before *Feſtus* the Succeſſor of *Felix* (an Account of which we have in the two following Chapters) was exactly the ſame. Here the *Jews* are urgent on the one Hand in renewing their Accuſations and demanding Judgment, (*Chap.* 25. *Verſes* 2, 3, 7, 15.) St. *Paul* on the other Hand aſſerts his own Innocency, declaring that *neither againſt the Law of the* Jews, *nor againſt the Temple, nor yet againſt* Cæſar he *had offended any thing at all*, (Verſe 8.) That is, he was a Tranſgreſſor neither againſt the Laws of *Religion*, nor yet againſt the Laws of the *State*; for this is to the very ſame Senſe of what he ſpeaks, *Chap.* 24. *Verſe* 16. *Herein do I exerciſe my ſelf to have always a Conſcience void of Offence towards God and towards Men.* Finally, when it was moved to him by the Governour, whether he would *go up to* Jeruſalem, *and there be judged before* him *of theſe Matters*; not being willing (as indeed he had little Reaſon) to truſt himſelf to the Mercy of the *Jews*, he rejects the Propoſal and *appeals unto* Cæſar, *Verſ.* 9, 10, 11.

What

What follows in the next Chapter is a Relation of another Hearing which St. *Paul* had before *Feſtus* in conjunction with *Agrippa*; where the Apoſtle having in the firſt Place ſuggeſted the true Cauſe of his Proſecution to be (as indeed it was) his *preaching Jeſus and the Reſurrection*; proceeds at large to vindicate his Proceeding, by giving them the Hiſtory of his miraculous *Converſion*. So that the whole being thus laid together, let any reaſonable Man conſider with himſelf, whether this be any thing like the Behaviour of one who diſallowed of the Magiſtrates Authority in matters of Religion? A Court of Judicature is not a proper Place for making Converts: And tho' it may very well be admitted as *one* Reaſon, why God permitted theſe Holy Men to be haled before the Judgment Seat of Unbelievers, that they might have an Opportunity of *bearing Teſtimony* of his Son Jeſus; Yet it muſt appear to any attentive Reader from the whole Scope of the Apoſtle's Defence, that what he *directly* and *immediately* propoſed by it was the juſtifying himſelf againſt his Accuſers; by ſhewing, with reſpect to ſome Points, that he was not guilty of the Facts laid to his Charge; and with reſpect to others, that what he did was nothing more than what ought to be done. But why, I pray, ſo careful to juſtify himſelf, unleſs becauſe he knew that his Judges had a *Right* to require a *Reaſon* of his Behaviour? Surely, had he thought otherwiſe, it had been natural for him to have taken the ſhorter and more obvious Method, and inſtead of uſing many Arguments and appealing at laſt to *Cæſar's Judgment Seat*; to have told them plainly, that foraſmuch as his Accuſers were unable to make good that Part of the Charge which related to

Sedition,

Sedition, he had Reaſon to hope the Caſe would be determined in his Favour; becauſe as to that other Part of it which concerned *Religion*, neither *they* nor *Cæſar* had *any thing to do with* it. Or if he thought it a juſt Tribute to his Maſters Honour to *give a Reaſon of the Hope that was in him*; yet it can hardly be ſuppoſed that he ſhould *wholly* have omitted that other no leſs warrantable Plea. For why, I beſeech you, was it not to be inſiſted upon? Not becauſe in general it was not *neceſſary*: For Magiſtrates were to be told of their Duties as well as private Perſons: And if they took too much upon them in taking cognizance of Religious Matters, the Miſtake (as I ſaid before) was of too much Conſequence to Mankind to be ſuffered to paſs without any Cenſure. But under the preſent Circumſtances perhaps it was not ſo *Prudent*. Why not? Could you wiſh for a more proper Occaſion? The Plea 'tis likely might have been ſomewhat Dangerous: But what? Could he be afraid of Danger who had ſo lately been ſtrengthened by a Heavenly Viſion: *Be of good cheer* Paul; *for as thou haſt teſtified of me in* Jeruſalem, *ſo muſt thou bear Witneſs alſo of me at* Rome (*i*)? And once before by another upon a like Occaſion, *Be not afraid but ſpeak and hold not thy Peace, for I am with thee and no Man ſhall ſet on thee to hurt thee* (*k*)? Can you ſuſpect him of want of Courage who in this very Conteſt, when the *High Prieſt* commanded him to be *ſmitten contrary to the Law*, gave ſo evident a Proof of his intrepidity in that brisk Reply, *God ſhall ſmite thee, thou whited Wall* (*l*)? Or finally if all this can be ſuppoſed;

(*i*) Chap. 23. Verſ. 11. (*k*) Chap. 18. Verſ. 9.
(*l*) Chap. 23. Verſ. 3.

is

is it yet to be imagined that he ſhould not upon *any* Occaſion, nor to *any* Perſon, let drop the *ſmalleſt Token* of his diſlike to ſo foul an Abuſe of the Magiſtrates Authority? The plain Truth is, that St. *Paul* was an utter Stranger to this new-fangled Doctrine, of which his own expreſs Words are yet a farther; and, in my Judgment, an inconteſtable Evidence. *I ſtand at* Cæſars *Judgment Seat* ὅπου με δεῖ κρίνεσθαι *where I* OUGHT *to be judged.* What can be ſaid to this? Why I think I ſee the utmoſt; which is, that theſe Words relate to that Part of the Caſe only, which was of a Civil Nature. But why will you thus arbitrarily impoſe a Limitation upon the Apoſtles Words, which the Context will not juſtify, nor indeed fairly admit of? His Plea is this, *Neither againſt the Law of the* Jews, *nor againſt the* Temple, *nor againſt* Cæſar, *have I offended any thing*, i. e. (as has afore been noted.) I have tranſgreſſed neither the Laws of Religion, nor the Laws of the State. Upon this *Feſtus* moves; *Wilt thou go up to* Jeruſalem *and there be judged of theſe Things?* Of what Things? Why of *all* thoſe Things which were the ſubject Matter of his Accuſation. Now theſe are the Things concerning which the Apoſtle ſays in his Reply, That he *ought to be judged at* Cæſars *Judgment Seat*; which therefore amounts to a very plain Confeſſion, that Matters both of a Civil and a Religious Nature, are the proper Subject of the Magiſtrates Cognizance.

What has been obſerved concerning the Behaviour of the Apoſtles, is alſo true of the Primitive Martyrs, as it were eaſy to ſhew by an Induction of particulars, did I think it needful. But the Thing is notorious: And what are all the ancient Apologies? Are they Exceptions againſt

gainſt the Juriſdiction of the Court; or Appeals to the common Senſe and Reaſon of Mankind, for the Juſtice and Righteouſneſs of the Chriſtian Cauſe? Much do we hear on all Hands, of the Iniquity, Partiality, and Cruelty of the *Roman* Powers; but not a ſingle Word that inſinuates, that in taking the Affairs of Religion under their Cognizance, they meddled with Matters which did not concern them. But how juſt ſoever the Cauſe of Chriſtianity was in itſelf; it certainly contradicted the Laws then in Being. *Tertullian* (*m*) owns the Charge; and how does he go about to remove it? By telling them that they had nothing to do to make Laws about Religion? No; He Anſwers (as a wiſe Man ought to Anſwer) that their Laws were bad and ought to be mended. *When* (ſays he) *you rigidly inſiſt upon this, that* Chriſtianity *is againſt* Law, *and preſcribe againſt diſpenſing one jot with the Letter upon any conſideration of Equity, this is declaring yourſelves Arbitrary; and you play the Tyrant if you will a Thing to be unlawful, becauſe you will, and not becauſe it is ſo. But if your Will is regulated by the Meaſures of Good and Evil, and you forbid a Thing becauſe it ought to be forbidden; then certainly by this Rule of right Reaſon you can-*

(*m*) Cum durè definitis dicendo, non licet eſſe vos, & hoc ſine ullo retractatu humaniore præſcribitis, vim profitemini: & iniquam exercetis Dominationem, ſi ideo negatis licere quia vultis, non quia debuit non licere. Quod ſi quia non debet, ideo non vultis licere, ſine dubio id non debet licere, quod male fit, & utiq; hoc ipſo præjudicatur licere quod bene fit. Si bonum invenero eſſe, quod Lex tua prohibuit, nonne ex illo præjudicio prohibere me non poteſt, quod, ſi malum eſſet, jure prohiberet? Si lex tua erravit, puto ab Homine concepta eſt, neq; enim de Cœlo ruit. *Apol.* Cap. 4.

not licence Evil, nor forbid the Obligations of doing Good. If your Law prohibits what is good, ſuch a Prohibition I conclude to be invalid: But if it forbids what is evil, I diſpute not my Obedience. Nor think it ſtrange if your Laws are ſometimes in the wrong, ſince they are but the Compoſures of Men, and not the Commands of God. One Paſſage indeed there is in this *Apology*, which our Adverſaries perhaps will be apt to catch at as favourable to their Opinion; and which therefore ought to be taken Notice of. It is to be met with *Chap.* 24. where ſpeaking to the *Roman* Magiſtrate he ſaith, (*n*) *See to it whether this does not concur to the making up of another Article of Irreligion againſt you; namely, the taking away Liberty in Religion, and interdicting Men the Option of their Deity, ſo that they muſt not worſhip the God they would, but are forced to worſhip the God they would not. Forced Service is of no eſteem even in the eyes of Men, and therefore even the* Egyptians *are tolerated in their vain Superſtition. They are permitted to make Gods of Birds and Beaſts, and to make it Capital to kill any of this ſort of Deitys. Every Province and City alſo has it's proper Gods.* —— We *alone are denyed the priviledge of having a Religion peculiar to ourſelves: We offend the*

(*n*) Videte ne & hoc ad Irreligioſitatis elogium concurrat adimere Libertatem Religionis, & interdicere Optionem Divinitatis, ut non liceat mihi colere quem velim ſed cogar colere quem nolim. Nemo ſe ab invito coli vellet, ne Homo quidem: atq; adeo & *Ægyptiis* permiſſa eſt tam vanæ Superſtitionis poteſtas *Avibus* & *Beſtiis* conſecrandis & Capite damnandis qui aliquem hujuſmodi Deum occiderit. Unicuiq; etiam Provinciæ & Civitati ſuus Deus eſt —— Nos ſoli arcemur a Religionis Proprietate. Lædimus Romanos, nec Romani habemur, quia non Romanorum Deum Colimus. *Ibid.* Cap. 24.

Romans

Romans *and are not to be look't upon as* Romans; *becauſe we do not Worſhip the God of the* Romans. Thus the Apologiſt; whoſe Words if I ſuppoſe them to import, that it is a wicked Thing in the Magiſtrate (in Matters purely of a Religious Nature) to puniſh a Man for acting agreeable to his own Opinion and Liking; I ſhall be thought I preſume, to have allowed to my Adverſaries all that they can deſire. Now 1ſt, Give me leave to obſerve that even this being admitted, the Paſſage comes far ſhort of the general Point, that the Magiſtrate has *nothing to do* with Religion. For it may conſiſtently be ſaid that the Magiſtrate *has* to do with Religion, and yet that he hath no right to *Puniſh* a Man for following his own Opinion in matters of Religion; becauſe, as has been ſhew, there are divers ways beſides that of *Puniſhing* Offenders, by which the Intereſt of Religion may be promoted; and conſequently divers ways beſides this by the purſuit of which the Magiſtrate may *concern* himſelf with Religion. The Magiſtrate has to do with Religion if he hath a Right by *any* Means to promote and encourage it; and this Right is not *denyed* by ſaying that he hath no Right to *Puniſh*, unleſs this were the *only* Means by which Religion may be encouraged. But, 2. If we will be ſo juſt as to allow *Tertullian* to be his own beſt Interpreter, this cannot poſſibly be his Meaning: For hear what he ſays a little before in this very Apology: (o) *We have laid aſide the*

(o) Deos veſtros colere deſinimus, ex quo illos non eſſe cognoſcimus. Hoc igitur exigere debetis uti probemus non eſſe illos Deos, & idcirco non colendos; quia tunc demum coli debuiſſent ſi Dij fuiſſent. Tunc & Chriſtiani puniendi, ſi quos non colerent, quia putarent non eſſe, conſtaret illos Deos eſſe. *Ibid.* Cap. 10.

Worſhip of your Gods, from the time that we knew them to be no Gods. That therefore which you may demand of us is, that we prove them not to be Gods, and therefore not to be worſhipped: For if they are indeed Gods, Divine Honour is certainly their due; and the Chriſtians *will* DESERVE PUNISHMENT *if it appears that they have refuſed to worſhip thoſe who are Gods under a Notion that they are not Gods.* See you not here how the Apologiſt joyns iſſue upon the Merits of the Cauſe, and declares that the Heathen Magiſtrates had a *right* to *demand* of the Chriſtians to prove their Gods to be no Gods, which if they were not able to do, their Conduct would then deſerve Correction? An arrant Abſurdity ſurely if it be true that the Magiſtrate has nothing to do with Religion! But what then you'll ask becomes of the Argument, that the Chriſtians ought not to be *forced* to worſhip the Heathen Deities, becauſe a forced Worſhip is no Worſhip? Why the Paſſages I think may eaſily be reconciled, by ſaying, that *mere* Puniſhment does not imply *Force*, or at leaſt not *that* Force which the Apologiſt complains of. The *Force* which *Tertullian* condemns as deſtructive of the Liberty of Religion, is the dragging Men by the Head and Ears, and compelling them by cruel Tortures, either to *Sacrifice*, or to pay ſome other external Mark of Divine Honour to the Heathen Deities againſt their wills. This we know was the way; and that the Apologiſt had this in his View, is plain from *Chap.* 28. where he repeats the ſame Argument, and refers back to the very Paſſage under Conſideration. (*p*) *It ſeems manifeſtly wrong*, ſays he,

(*p*) Facile iniquum videtur liberos Homines invitos urgeri ad Sacrificandum; nam et aliàs divinæ rei faciundæ libens animus

he, *to force Men to* SACRIFICE *againſt the natural Freedom of their Wills, ſince, as I have elſewhere declared, Religion muſt be the Effect of a willing Mind. It muſt needs be very fooliſh to preſs Men to the Service of the Gods, whom for their own ſakes they ought to ſerve freely,* A fooliſh and wicked Thing it is without doubt, whether the Worſhip, Men are compelled to, be right, or whether it be wrong. But ſince this is not eſſential to the Notion of Puniſhment, the Apologiſt whilſt he condemned the one, might (where the Goodneſs of the Cauſe would juſtify it) very conſiſtently plead for the other. It may be ſaid farther, that by the Phraſe *Deos veſtros colere deſinimus*; *Tertullian* meant ſomething more than the Words do properly and literally expreſs; *i. e.* not merely a *ceaſing* or *forbearing* to worſhip the *Roman* Gods, but the teaching every where that they were *Abominations*, and that it was *impious* and *wicked* to Honour them as Gods. This was the Caſe of the firſt Preachers of the Goſpel; and for this it was that they were ſo roughly treated by the Civil Powers. Not to Worſhip the *Roman* Gods was a thing in which the Chriſtians were not ſingular: For as *Tertullian* here obſerves, every Country under the *Roman* Juriſdiction had its *peculiar* Deities, in the Worſhip of which they were ſuffer'd without any Moleſtation, becauſe they moleſted none in the Worſhip of theirs. But the Chriſtian Preachers were to root Idolatry out of the World, which the Heathen Magiſtrates could by no means endure;

animus indicitur. Certe ineptum exiſtimaretur ſi quis ab alio cogeretur ad honorem Deorum, quos ultro ſui cauſa placere deberet. *Ibid.* Cap. 28.

nor *ought* they (may our Apologiſt very conſiſtently be ſuppoſed to ſay) to have endured it, if under the Notion of deſtroying Idolatry, they had oppoſed the Worſhip of *real* Deities. For whether it be *Truth* or not, 'tis *Senſe* at leaſt, to maintain, that every one ought to have the Liberty of chuſing what God he has a mind to, without being forced into a Worſhip he does not approve; yea, and (if you will have it ſo) without any ſort of Obſtruction from the Magiſtrate; and yet to affirm that thoſe are deſervedly puniſhed who under a falſe Perſuaſion are not content to be in Error themſelves, unleſs alſo they be allowed openly to decry and vilify the Gods of their Country.

The Uſe that I intend to make of this is only to confirm what has been before laid down, to wit, that neither Chriſt nor his Apoſtles ever taught their Followers to believe that the Civil Magiſtrate has nothing to do to concern himſelf with Religion: For had they taught any ſuch Doctrine, the Primitive Chriſtians, as they could not have been ignorant of it, ſo neither could they have avoided taking Notice of it upon ſuch Occaſions as theſe: At leaſt they could not ſo groſly have diſſembled, nor have been ſo weakly unjuſt to themſelves and their own Cauſe, as to declare in favour of the contrary Opinion. But that no ſuch Doctrine ſhould have been taught if it were a true Doctrine; that the Civil Powers ſhould be ſuffer'd to go on in an inveterate Error, of ſo much conſequence to the Order of Society, and to the State of Religion throughout the World, without the leaſt Reprehenſion from thoſe who were ſent by Providence to be the Reformers of Mankind; (eſpecially conſidering, as I before obſerved, that God had as it were

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given countenance to the Miſtake, in that only Commonwealth which was of his own Appointment; this I ſay) is a Thing ſo incredible, that with me, it will always ſtand as a Foundation ſtrong enough to bear even the whole weight of the Cauſe. But as to our Adverſaries, all I ſhall demand of them is, That they would admit the *Silence* of the Scripture, (upon which, for want of better Argument, they would ſeem ſometimes to lay a mighty Streſs) to be *as ſtrong* an Objection at leaſt againſt *their* Opinion, as it is againſt *ours*. If ſo, the Cauſe will thus far hang *in æquilibrio*; and whether the other Conſiderations which I have here offer'd, thrown into our Scale, are not of Moment ſufficient to turn the Ballance, is what I now ſubmit to the Judgment of the World. I know not that I have any where impoſed a Fallacy upon the Reader: And that it may the more readily appear, either that I have not, or, if I have, where it lies; I think it proper to ſubjoyn the following *Analyſis*, which contains the whole weight of this, and of the foregoing Chapter.

The Analyſis *of an Argument proving the Magiſtrates general Right to ſupport and encourage true Religion, by Human Laws.*

DEFINITIONS.

1. BY the true Religion, I mean any true Way of Worſhip, whether it be diſcoverable by the mere Light of Nature, or whether it be of Divine, Poſitive, Inſtitution.

2. By the Magiſtrate I underſtand the Perſon or Perſons, in whom the ſupreme Legiſlative Power in any Commonwealth is lodged.

nor *ought* they (may our Apologiſt very conſiſtently be ſuppoſed to ſay) to have endured it, if under the Notion of deſtroying Idolatry, they had oppoſed the Worſhip of *real* Deities. For whether it be *Truth* or not, 'tis *Senſe* at leaſt, to maintain, that every one ought to have the Liberty of chuſing what God he has a mind to, without being forced into a Worſhip he does not approve; yea, and (if you will have it ſo) without any ſort of Obſtruction from the Magiſtrate; and yet to affirm that thoſe are deſervedly puniſhed who under a falſe Perſuaſion are not content to be in Error themſelves, unleſs alſo they be allowed openly to decry and vilify the Gods of their Country.

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3. By his Right to encourage, &c. I mean his Right conſider'd as Magiſtrate, or conſider'd as acting in his Publick Capacity.

Postulatum.

That true Religion in the Nature of the Thing is capable of being ſupported and encouraged by the Methods of Civil Adminiſtration.

SECT. I.

Of the Magiſtrates Right to ſupport and encourage true Religion by and under the Law of Nature.

Propositions.

1. The Concern of the Magiſtrate ought to bear an exact and adequate Proportion to the End of his Office.

2. It is on all Hands acknowledged that one End of the Magiſtrates Office is the ſecuring the Publick Civil Good.

3. Therefore whatever affects the Publick Civil Good falls under the Magiſtrates Care.

4. True Religion (which under the Law of Nature is nothing elſe than Moral Virtue) does certainly affect the Publick Civil Good, 1. As the Publick Civil Good is concerned in the Behaviour of the Subject, upon which Religon or the want of Religion, muſt always have a very ſenſible Influence; And, 2. As the Publick Civil Good is concerned in the Pleaſure or Diſpleaſure of Almighty God, who (as the Heathens themſelves underſtood, and the Scriptures do plainly declare) bleſſeth thoſe who pay a due Reverence

to his Name, and frequently puniſheth whole Nations *for the Wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.*

5. Upon both theſe Accounts then, it is evident that the Magiſtrates Care reaches to Natural Religion, and not (as ſome have pretended) to the bare external Actions of Men, excluſive of the Religion of ſuch Actions. For bare external Actions can neither procure the Bleſſings of Providenee, nor avert or remove his Judgments. Nor can that outward Regularity of Behaviour, which is neceſſary to the Welfare of all Publick Societies be effectually ſecured, without ſecuring that inward Virtue or Morality which ought to be the Foundation of ſuch outward Behaviour.

It appears by the foregoing Propoſitions that the Magiſtrate is concerned to take care of Natural Religion indirectly, or in virtue of his being concerned to take care of the Publick Civil Good. It may be proper now to conſider whether the Magiſtrate be concerned to take care of Natural Religion, any otherwiſe than as he is concerned to take care of the Publick Civil Good. It is my Opinion that he is otherwiſe concerned; Inſomuch that if it were poſſible to ſeparate Natural Religion from the Publick Civil Good, it would ſtill be his Duty to take care of Natural Religion. For,

6. As the Concern of the Magiſtrate ought to bear an exact and adequate Proportion to the End of his Office; ſo the End of the Magiſtrates Office is to be meaſured by the End of Commonwealths: Which (whatever has been pretended of late) I cannot believe, in their original Inſtitution, to relate merely to Publick Civil

Civil Good excluſive of Religion. What was in Fact the End propounded when Men firſt of all entered into Society, it is neither poſſible for us to know, nor at all Material to the preſent Queſtion. Becauſe, ſuppoſing Men in a State of Natural Liberty, and intending to give up that Liberty or any Part of it, into the Hands of any particular Perſon or Perſons, for their common Good, (which is the Scheme of Government upon which I proceed;) Suppoſing this I ſay; By the ſame Right that one Set or Number of Men in one Place propoſe one End; another Set or Number of Men in another Place may propoſe other Ends: And that will be the moſt perfect Commonwealth, by which all thoſe good and warrantable Ends are propoſed, which may be anſwered or provided for, by living in Society. Wherefore,

7. Since the preſent Controverſy relates not to any particular Commonwealth, but to Commonwealths in general and at large; when it is asked, What is the End of a Commonwealth? The meaning of that Queſtion muſt be, What is the End, or what are the Ends which a Number of Wiſe and Reaſonable Men in a State of Natural Liberty, may and ought to propoſe by quitting that Liberty, and coaleſcing into a Body Politick? And whatever thoſe Ends be, which it is, in the Nature of Things, proper and fitting that ſuch a Number of Men ſhould propoſe; thoſe muſt be eſteemed to be the Ends of Commonwealths according to their original Inſtitution. The Ends I ſay; Not according to what in Fact may have been (for in this Reſpect there may have been great Diverſity in different Times, and different Places;) but according to what in Reaſon ought to be, and what in Fact always

always muſt be, where a Commonwealth ſubſiſts in it's utmoſt Perfection. Wherefore,

8. Although the ſecuring themſelves from mutual Injuries, and the promoting each others Temporal Good, is doubtleſs one of thoſe Ends which a Number of Wiſe and Reaſonable Men in a State of Liberty, may and ought to propoſe by entring into Society; Yet this is not the only End. For Wiſe and Reaſonable Men cannot be ſuppoſed to be leſs concerned for the Honour of God (whoſe Creatures they are) and their future Happineſs, than for their preſent Temporal Advantages. God's Honour is his true Worſhip: By this our future and main Intereſt is ſecured. Wherefore ſince (as the Queſtion ſuppoſes) true Religion is in the Nature of it capable of being ſupported and encouraged by the Laws of Society, as well as the Publick Civil Good; The Conſequence muſt be, That the ſupporting and encouraging true Religion, is alſo one of thoſe Ends, which a Number of Wiſe and Reaſonable Men in a State of Natural Liberty may and ought to propoſe by entring into Society.

9. To evince the Truth of this Aſſertion yet farther, let us conſider the great need there is, that even Natural Religion ſhould be ſupported and encouraged by Human Laws. The Law of Natural Religion is indeed no other, than the Law of Natural Reaſon. But then it is the Law of Reaſon rightly exerciſed and carefully improved, which leaves room for all thoſe Errors to creep in, which may be the Effect of want of Judgment, or want of Conſideration: And how many and how great theſe may be the Condition of the World, before the Preaching of the Goſpel, is a ſad and lamentable Inſtance.

Further-

Furthermore; Natural Religion is the Practice of thoſe Duties to which the Light of Nature directs us, from which all Men are too prone to be led aſide by their Vices and their Paſſions. To obviate theſe Evils, what effectual Remedy can be found, but from the Care of the Magiſtrate in providing both that Inſtruction be conſtantly and regularly Adminiſtred to the People, and that proper and ſeaſonable Reſtraints be laid upon Evil doers? the want of which Things was the true Reaſon, why ſo much Ignorance, Superſtition, and Wickedneſs, prevailed in the Heathen World. Every Maſter finds the uſefulneſs and neceſſity of theſe Methods in his own Family; and Reaſon and Experience ſhews them to be as neceſſary in the Commonwealth. Wiſe and Reaſonable Men therefore (*i. e.* Men who are under a juſt Concern for God and Religion) cannot, in framing themſelves into a Body Politick, neglect the Conſideration of theſe Things, but muſt have a due regard to them; not only with a view to Publick Civil Good, but purely and immediately for the ſake of God and Religion.

Upon the whole then I think it appears that the Magiſtrate is concerned to take care of Natural Religion, both directly and indirectly: Indirectly, as he is the Guardian of the Publick Civil Good, which has a neceſſary dependance upon Natural Religion; and directly as, in virtue of an immediate Obligation, he is alſo the Guardian of Religion.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of the Magiſtrates Right to encourage true Religion under the Goſpel Revelation.

PROPOSITIONS.

1. Whatever Right the Magiſtrate had to ſupport and encourage true Religion under the Law of Nature; the ſame Right he has to encourage true Religion now under the Goſpel, if the Goſpel has made no Difference.

2. The Goſpel hath made no Difference. For if it has, this Difference muſt have ariſen either, 1. From hence, that the Goſpel hath ſomewhere prohibited the Chriſtian Magiſtrate to ſupport and encourage Chriſtianity; Or, 2. From hence that, in the Nature of the Thing, there is not the ſame Reaſon why the Chriſtian Magiſtrate ſhould concern himſelf with Chriſtianity, as there is why the Magiſtrate Chriſtian or not Chriſtian, ſhould concern himſelf with Natural Religion. But neither of theſe Allegations is true. Therefore the Goſpel has made no Difference.

To make good what I ſay concerning the firſt Branch of the foregoing Disjunction, it is enough to obſerve that no ſuch Prohibition is to be found in the Goſpel. To make good what I ſay as to the ſecond, it will be needful to look back to thoſe Reaſons which have been offer'd to prove the Magiſtrates Right to encourage Natural Religion, and to ſhew that they infer the ſame Things with reſpect to Revealed Religion, *i. e.* with reſpect to Chriſtianity,

ſtianity, which is now ſuppoſed to be the true Revealed Religion. Now theſe Reaſons referring to the double Capacity in which the Magiſtrate may be conſidered, (*viz.* his Capacity as Guardian of the Publick Civil Good, and his Capacity as Guardian of Religion;) they muſt therefore be diſtinctly ſpoken to. And

1. As Guardian of the Publick Civil Good.

3. It hath been ſhewn that the Magiſtrate is concerned to take care of Natural Religion, becauſe the Publick Civil Good has a neceſſary dependance upon the Behaviour of the Subject, which is always influenced by Religion or the want of Religion. Now this Reaſon will extend the Magiſtrates Concern even to Chriſtianity. For as Morality is the Foundation of a good Civil Behaviour; ſo Chriſtianity is evidently a great ſupport of Morality. I will not deny but that a Man may be Morally good who is no Chriſtian: And Fact ſhews that Government may well ſubſiſt where there is no Revelation. But it is nevertheleſs true that Morality is greatly ſecured by the Religion of the Goſpel, whoſe Precepts and whoſe Motives are both an Improvement and Enforcement of the Law of Nature. Suppoſing then, but not granting, that the Magiſtrate is not concerned to take care of Chriſtianity for it's own ſake; he is notwithſtanding concerned to take care of it, for the ſake of Morality.

4. What is here ſaid of Chriſtianity in general and at large, is proportionably true of it's particular Branches. For the Whole ſubſiſts by it's Parts:

Parts: And whatever weakens or deſtroys one Part of the Chriſtian Revelation, has a manifeſt Tendency to weaken and deſtroy all the reſt. The Obſervance or Non-obſervance of poſitive Inſtitutions, has no neceſſary immediate Connection with Morality; yet it concerns the Magiſtrate that the Obſervance of them be encouraged for the ſake and on the account of Morality. For theſe Inſtitutions were appointed as Inſtruments to ſecure the Righteouſneſs of the Goſpel; which (as has afore been obſerved) is both the Safeguard and Perfection of Morality. But farther yet and,

5. It has been ſhewn that the Magiſtrate is concerned to take care of Natural Religion, becauſe the Happineſs of Society is concerned in the Favour, or Diſpleaſure of Almighty God, conſider'd as the Author of Temporal Bleſſing, or Temporal Curſing; which Reaſoning may in its full force be applyed as well to Points of Revealed Religion. There may be Iniquity againſt a Revealed and Poſitive, as well as againſt a Natural and Moral Law. Now all Iniquity is the proper Subject of the Divine Correction. And we muſt not forget the Inſtances we meet with in Stripture, where God threatens to puniſh the *Jews* for their Diſobedience to his own Inſtitutions. As he tenders then, the Publick Good, the Magiſtrate is ſo far concerned to take care of the Laws and Inſtitutions of Revealed Religion, as to ſee (as much as in him lies) that they be not either ignorantly miſtaken, or careleſly neglected, or inſolently and prophanely vilified and ſet at nought.

Thus far we have conſider'd the Magiſtrate as Guardian of the Publick Civil Good; It remains now that we conſider him,

2. As

2. As Guardian of Religion; In which reſpect it is plain that the Suppoſition of a Revelation, or of no Revelation, can make no Difference. For

6. If the Magiſtrate has a Right to take care of Natural Religion, merely becauſe it is Religion (which is the Caſe;) It will follow that he is concerned to take care of any Poſitive Law or Inſtitution; when, in virtue of the Divine Authority enjoyning or commanding it, it comes to be Religion. This I ſay muſt be the Conſequence, upon Suppoſition that it be needful that ſuch Divine, Poſitive, Laws or Inſtitutions, be ſupported and encouraged by Human Authority. I obſerve then,

7. That the Laws of Revealed Religion have need to be ſupported and encouraged by Human Authority, as well as the Laws of Natural Religion. For thoſe Vices and Paſſions by which Men are apt to be led to the Neglect and Diſobedience of the Laws of Natural Religion, have a like tendency to lead them to neglect and diſobey the Laws of Revealed Religion: And therefore the ſame Remedies which are needful with Reſpect to the one, are needful alſo with Reſpect to the other.

The Concluſion then is; That the Magiſtrates Right to encourage both Natural and Revealed Religion, ſtands upon one and the ſame Foundation.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Containing an Anſwer to the Principal Objections.

THE Doctrine I would advance being thus far deduced, by way of direct and poſitive Proof, from Principles (as I hope) plain and evident; I come now to conſider the moſt material Objections that have been made againſt it. Of which that the Reader may have a clear and diſtinct View, he is deſired to recollect, that the Right pleaded for in the foregoing Chapters, is a Right in the Civil Magiſtrate, by the Methods above ſpecified, to ſupport and encourage, not Religion in general, but the *True* Religion only. And great Neceſſity was there for ſtating the Queſtion in theſe Terms, becauſe there can be no Pretence that the Magiſtrate, or any one elſe, can have a Right to encourage a *Falſe* Religion; at leaſt, not under the *Notion* and *Formality* of a Falſe Religion. Hence then ariſeth a very material Queſtion, *viz.* By whoſe *Judgment* muſt the Magiſtrate be determined, which, among the variety of Religions profeſſed in the World, is the *true* Religion which alone ought to be encouraged: And the Anſwer ſeems plain and obvious; to wit, that he muſt be determined by *his own*. For the Encouraging Religion is to be conſider'd as a Branch of the Magiſtrates Conduct, for which he ſtands accountable to God the ſupreme King and Governour of the Earth; and in which therefore, as well as in all other Matters where Reaſon and Conſcience is concerned, his *own* Judgment muſt be his *immediate* Rule.

I. Now this Obſervation makes way for the firſt Objection, which is this, That ſince it is allowed that the Magiſtrate is to judge for himſelf what is the true Religion; to ſay that the Magiſtrate hath a Right to encourage the true Religion, is to ſay that he hath a Right to encourage that Religion which he *thinks* or *believes* to be the true Religion; which gives every Magiſtrate an equal Right to encourage *his own* Religion, and alike juſtifies the Encouragement of *Falſhood* in oppoſition to *Truth*, (if it be received by the Magiſtrate under the Notion of *Truth*) and of *Truth* in oppoſition to *Falſhood*. But this Conſequence I utterly deny. For *Right* (in the Senſe wherein I ſpeak of *Right*) is founded in the Nature and Reaſon of Things, which the Perſuaſions of Men cannot alter: And *Error* how far ſoever it may *excuſe*, will never *juſtify*. It is true of every Man, as well as of the Magiſtrate, that he muſt be determined by his own Judgment in conſidering what is reaſonable or unreaſonable, what is fitting or unfitting. But if a Man ſhould think it reaſonable to take away my Goods, this will not give him a *Right* to do it; for one Man's *Error* cannot take away anothers *Property*. So likewiſe it is true of the Magiſtrate in *Civil* Affairs as well as in *Religious*, that his own Judgment muſt be the Rule of his own Conduct. But does any one argue from hence that he has therefore a Right to *oppreſs* and *tyrannize* over his Subjects, in caſe his Judgment ſhould direct him to unreaſonable Methods of Civil Adminiſtration? Either ſay that the Inference is juſt in one Caſe, or give it up in both: for the Parallel, as every one ſees, leaves no room for Diſtinction. Were it only ſaid, that becauſe the Magiſtrate's own Judgment is the Rule

Rule of his own Conduct, therefore it will be his *Duty*, or he will be *obliged* to encourage that Religion which he *believes* to be the true; and conſequently to encourage a *Falſe* Religion if he believes it to be the *true*; the Concluſion would be no other than what the Principles I am pleading for do naturally and neceſſarily infer. But it may be obſerved, and ought carefully to be attended to in all Diſputes of this Nature, that a Man may be bound to do many things which, yet he hath no *Right* to do: And this is always the Caſe when Men are led aſide by the Miſtakes of their Judgments, which are enough to create an *Obligation*, but cannot, as I ſaid juſt now, affect the Nature of Things ſo as to make them in any reſpect otherwiſe than they were before. There is indeed a Senſe in which the Magiſtrate may be ſaid to have a *Right* to do a Thing which in itſelf is *wrong*; and that is as the Word is uſed *relatively* to Human Government, and implies only an *exemption* from Civil Juriſdiction on the one Hand, and a *Subjection* to it on the other. In this Senſe of the Word, I ſay, the Magiſtrate may ſometimes have a *Right* to be obeyed even in unreaſonable Laws, becauſe in him reſides the ſupreme Authority on Earth, whoſe Injunctions it may not always be permitted to the Subjects to diſpute. But as this is not the *Right* which I am contending for, ſo neither is it that which our Adverſaries mean. For the *Right* which they mean, is ſuch a *Right* as is ſuppoſed to reſult from *Error* in the Magiſtrate; whereas the *Right* I now ſpeak of, as is plain, has no Relation to *Error*, but is the ſame whether the Magiſtrate judgeth right, or whether he judgeth wrong.

To thoſe therefore who charge it upon our Principles, that they *authorize* the eſtabliſhing all ſorts of Errors; I muſt take leave to reply, That they do but betray either great careleſneſs in not diſtinguiſhing the plaineſt Things, or great unfairneſs in loading with Calumny, what they do not find it ſo eaſy to diſprove. I ſay it again, and muſt inſiſt upon it, that an *erroneous Judgment* tho' it *obliges*, cannot *authorize*. And if any one will oppoſe me in this, let him ſay roundly that every Man is *authorized* to do whatever *he thinks* is right and fitting; or in other Words that every one's own Opinion is the Meaſure of *Right* and *Wrong*; and ſee how it will be received. All that can with Truth be ſaid is, That every one's own Opinion is *to him* the Meaſure of *Right* and *Wrong*; which comes up exactly to what I affirm, and goes no farther, to wit, that every Man is under an *Obligation* to do what his own Judgment directs him to, *as if it were* Right: For *Right* and *Wrong* have their determinate Limits, which are always and every where the ſame. Perhaps our Adverſaries will tell us, that this is all that they mean themſelves. Well; Let us but underſtand them and I am ſatisfied. But if this be all, the *Terror* of the Objection vaniſhes at once, which ſeems to be entirely founded in the ambiguity of the Terms, by which it is expreſſed. To ſay abſolutely that it is a *juſt* and a *righteous* Thing to eſtabliſh Error, is to deſtroy the eternal Difference between Good and Evil: and the Principles which are juſtly chargeable with any ſuch Inference, ought without any farther Hearing, to be rejected as abſurd and monſtrous. But to ſay that the Magiſtrate under certain Circumſtances may be *obliged* to eſtabliſh Error, is ſaying

ing no more of him in his Station and Capacity than what is every Day ſeen of others in theirs: And it will require ſomething more than the bare naming it, to give it the force and weight of an Argument. We can very well bear to have it told us, that the Heathen Magiſtrates were under an *Obligation* to make Laws to diſcourage *Chriſtianity*, upon Suppoſition that they were perſuaded that it was a falſe Religion; and that *Papiſts* are alſo obliged to make Laws againſt *Proteſtantiſm*, in Caſe they believe it to be a falſe way of Worſhip: All this I ſay we can very well bear; provided it be allowed us (which in common Senſe and Reaſon ought to be allowed us) that ſuch Perſuaſions do not affect or alter the intrinſic Nature of Things: That there is ſtill a *certain*, *eſſential*, Difference between Truth and Falſhood, about which how much ſoever Men may miſtake, perfect Wiſdom never can: And that *Chriſtians* and *Proteſtants* in their uſe of Means for the ſupport and encouragement of the Truth may be *juſtified*; whilſt *Heathens* and *Papiſts* in making uſe of the very ſame Means in oppoſition to the Truth will be left *unjuſtified*. In a Word, I care not how far Men are pleaſed to carry the *Obligation* ariſing from an erroneous Conſcience; provided they do not go about to *ſanctify* thoſe *unrighteous Actions* which a Man may be led to thro' the Senſe, and in Virtue, of this *Obligation*.

II. The Point then being brought to this Iſſue, *viz.* That the Principles above laid down give no *Right* or *Authority* to the Magiſtrate to eſtabliſh his own Errors; we muſt next ſee what will naturally follow from allowing (what indeed cannot be denyed) that he is *obliged* or *bound* to do it. And the Conſequence is indeed plain;

That ſince it is the Duty of every Magiſtrate to encourage that Religion which he in his own Judgment believes to be the true; it will in Fact happen, that Error will many times be encouraged in the room of Truth. And if it ſhould ſo fall out (which has for the moſt part been the Caſe) that the greater Part of the governing Powers throughout the World do embrace Error; Error will moſt generally be eſtabliſhed. All this I ſay is undoubtedly true. But what follows farther? Why here we are uſually entertained with the general Harrangues upon the deplorable State of Religion in *Popiſh* and *Mahometan* Countries. But there is no Point which more ſtands in need of a proper Diſtinction than this: And how terrible ſoever the Objection may ſeem, the Reader will find that I have nothing o fear from it, when I have replyed to it, upon two Hypotheſes. For

1. If the meaning of the Objection be barely this, That Human Laws when made uſe of to encourage a Falſe Religion, *will do much hurt* to the True; and that *therefore* the Magiſtrate, who may be miſtaken in judging what is true Religion, ought not to be veſted with the Power of encouraging it by Human Laws: If this Objection I ſay goes no farther than this, The Premiſes are true, but the Concluſion is falſe, becauſe it proves a great deal too much, *i. e.* more than the Objectors themſelves intend, and more than in common Senſe and Reaſon can be admitted of. The Objection is commonly applyed to *Worldly Motives*, i. e. to *outward Reſtraint* only. But in reality, it lies againſt all Methods, as well as againſt one. For ſince it is in the Nature of *all* Methods that *can* be made uſe of to ſupport true Religion, that they will

hurt

hurt true Religion if they be employed againſt it; and ſince you can allow of *no* Means to be made uſe of for the ſupport of Truth, which muſt not alſo be allowed to be made uſe of for the ſupport of Error, in caſe Error happens to be received as Truth: The Conſequence is, that if this be admitted as a good Reaſon why *outward Reſtraint* ought to be laid aſide, it will be as good a Reaſon why all other Methods ought to be laid aſide as well as this. That the Reader may feel the weight of this Reply, he need only to take the Objection in their own Words, and try if it may not be applied with equal ſtrength againſt any Method he can think of. (*q*) "The "Caſe then (ſay they) is this; That the Rule "being once laid down that the Civil Magiſtrate "is to add the Sanctions of this World to Re- "ligion: It becomes the indiſpenſable Duty of "every Magiſtrate to annex them to that which "he himſelf eſteems to be true Religion. —— So "that if he himſelf be of a falſe Religion, he is "obliged in Conſcience by this Rule, to pro- "mote it by his Worldly Sanctions if he be- "lieves it to be a true one. A *Mahometan*, a "*Pagan*, a *Jew*, a *Papiſt*, are every one of them "under the ſame Obligation to promote the "Profeſſion of their own Religion, and their "own Way of Worſhip". Thus goes the Objection. I will now ask, whether the ſame Argument may not as well be applied to *Publick Inſtruction* and *Perſuaſion*. And the thing is plain and undeniable. For "the Caſe (ſay I) is this, "That the Rule being once laid down, that there "ought to be Perſons appointed by Publick

(*q*) Anſw. to the Committee, *p.* 167.

" Authority to *inſtruct* the Ignorant in the " Knowledge of God's true Religion; it be- " comes the indiſpenſable Duty of thoſe in whom " this Authority is lodged, to appoint ſuch " Perſons as will teach thoſe Doctrines, which " they themſelves ſhall judge to be true Re- " ligion; and conſequently ſuch Perſons as ſhall " teach a falſe Religion if they believe it to be " a true one. And thus a *Mahometan*, a *Pagan*, " a *Jew*, a *Papiſt*, (and as many other Sects as " you can conceive) are under the ſame Obli- " gation to promote their own Religion, and " their own Way of Worſhip." Will true Religion be hurt by this Miſapplication of *Inſtruction*, or will it not? 'Tis plain that it *will*, ſo long as there are Men in the World (and Multitudes there will always be of ſuch) who are capable of being impoſed upon by falſe Reaſoning. But this perhaps you'll ſay is what our Adverſaries would have; who being for removing the Care of Religion entirely out of the Magiſtrates Hands, muſt be ſuppoſed to allow that he has as little to do to make any Publick Proviſion for the Adminiſtration of *Inſtruction*; as to make any other Proviſion whereby Religion may be ſupported and encouraged. Right. But even here the Objection does not end. It reaches to all *Private* Methods of Inſtruction, and ſhews (if it ſhews any Thing) that *Parents* ought to lay aſide that timely Care, which Nature as well as Religion teaches them to exerciſe towards their *Children*. For it is true of *Parents* as well as of *Paſtors* and *Magiſtrates*, that their own Judgment is their Rule; and no Body needs to be told that much Miſchief will follow, if being themſelves miſtaken in their Notions of Religion, they breed up their Children in Error and Superſtition.

I will not ſtay to enlarge upon theſe Matters; For in ſhort there is nothing in the Objection as thus ſtated, which may not be made uſe of as an Argument againſt any Thing, which either thro' the *Weakneſs* or thro' the *Corruption* of Men, may be applied to a bad Purpoſe. If our Adverſaries will not grant that the Magiſtrate has any thing to do with *Religion*, they will own at leaſt that he has to do with the *Publick Civil Good*. And in Truth if he has nothing to do either with the one or with the other, there is an End of all Government: And the Matter will at laſt come to this, if the preſent way of Reaſoning be allowed to be juſt. For the Caſe is clear, that what thro' *Ignorance* of the true Means to ſecure the Publick Good on the one Hand; and what thro' *Avarice* and *Ambition* on the other; there may be a Miſapplication of Power; and then all thoſe Evils will follow with reſpect to the *Civil* Concerns of Men, which in virtue of a like Miſapplication will follow with regard to their *Religions*. If Mr. *Locke* had well conſider'd this, he would have found leſs Cauſe to make himſelf merry with thoſe; who, (r) *becauſe all Men are promiſcuouſly apt to be miſled by Paſſion and Luſt, are for putting the Care of Religion into the Hands of thoſe* (meaning the Magiſtrates) *who are as apt to be miſled by Paſſion and Luſt as themſelves.* For let me ask: Is not the very *Reaſon* of *Civil Government* founded in this, that Men are apt to be miſled by their Paſſions and Luſts? And is not the chuſing of a *Magiſtrate* (ſuppoſing his Office to reach no farther than to the Concerns of this Life) an Inſtance beyond all Exception,

(r) 3d Letter for Toleration, *p.* 31.

that it is reaſonable, in order to prevent thoſe Evils which would ariſe from the Luſts and Paſſions of many, to bring them under the Power of one, or of a few, who are as liable to be miſled by Luſt and Paſſion as themſelves? What odd Work is this! You would have Magiſtrates, not Men, but Creatures above them. With all my Heart, if you can tell where to find them. But ſo long as we are Men, we muſt be contented to be governed (if we will be governed at all) by Men. And if ſo, the Reaſon is yet wanting, why thoſe Evils which ariſe from the Miſapplication of Power, is an Objection againſt the Magiſtrates Right in one Caſe, and no Objection in another; altho' the Evils which may be apprehended, are, according to their reſpective Natures, the ſame in both. What is ſaid of Civil Government in general, is true of all thoſe ſeveral Ways and Means by which Civil Government is ſupported and maintained. I will inſtance only in the Caſe of *War*, which has been always adjudged to be a lawful and proper Means of Defence, when one Nation invades the Property of another Nation, and there is no other way left to bring them to reaſonable Terms. But how ſtands the Caſe, admitting the preſent Objection to be juſt? Why for ought that I can perceive, the Magiſtrate is as much to blame when he engages his Subjects in a War for the Defence of the State, as when he makes Laws for the ſupport of Religion: For "the Caſe will again be this, That "the Rule being once laid down, that the Ma-"giſtrate is to make War in Defence of Civil "Right and Property; every Magiſtrate will "make War in Defence of that which *he calls* "Right and Property, and conſequently in De-"fence

" fence of what was gotten by Rapine and " Oppreſſion, if he calls *that* Right and Pro- " perty." Where is the Difference between the Argument as applied to one Caſe, and as applied to the other? I declare I can ſee none; and Fact juſtifies it alike in both. If our Adverſaries can give Inſtances of falſe Opinions, ſupported by Human Laws under the Notion of true Religion; it will be no hard Matter to give them as many Inſtances of falſe Claims, ſupported by force of Arms under the Notion of Civil Right: And if we take the World round I believe it will be found, that for one War juſtly entred into, there have been ten undertaken thro' Avarice and the Luſt of Power. The Evil is great in both Caſes without doubt. But what then? Does any one think this to be a good Reaſon againſt the uſe of War? Muſt one Nation ſit down and tamely ſubmit to be ravaged by another; becauſe Magiſtrates may be wicked and ambitious, or becauſe Miſtakes may be committed in judging about Right and Property? —— 'Tis high time to have done; for we are now going to diſpute the very firſt Principles of common Senſe.

Upon this Foot then you ſee, the Objection is palpably defective: And that I may ſhew wherein it is ſo, and thereby lead the Reader to a true State of the Queſtion, I muſt obſerve; That as the impulſive Cauſe which moved Men at firſt to enter into Society, was the Experience they had that Mankind, tho' reaſonable Creatures, are generally diſpoſed to be led aſide by their Vices and their Paſſions: So, that which determines them in the Choice of a Magiſtrate, *i. e.* of any particular Perſon or Perſons, to be veſted with Authority to controul the reſt, is a Supposition

poſition that ſuch Perſon or Perſons, will make a juſt and a proper Uſe of the Power that is given them. If this Suppoſition were founded upon an *abſolute Certainty*, it would then be reaſonable to put *any* Power into the Magiſtrates Hand, which being applied as it *ought* to be applied, will do *good*. But there being no ſuch abſolute Certainty ſo long as Men are Men: Thus much muſt be yielded to our Oppoſers, that in veſting the Magiſtrate with Power, great regard ought to be had to thoſe Conſequences, which may probably enſue in Caſe that Power falls into ill Hands. And the Rule I conceive is this; that where the Conſequences which may in Reaſon ordinarily be apprehended from the miſapplication of any Power are *as bad as*, or *worſe* than, thoſe which may be apprehended from the *want* of ſuch Power; that no ſuch Power ought to be given. On the contrary it muſt be reaſonable to put any Power into the Magiſtrates Hand, which being rightly uſed will procure *greater Good*, than the miſapplication of it will ordinarily procure *Evil*. This is the Caſe of Civil Government in general, the entire want of which would be attended with worſe Conſequences than thoſe which can ordinarily ariſe from Male-adminiſtration. The like may be ſaid of War, without the Uſe of which no Government can poſſibly ſubſiſt. And in all theſe Caſes, the Rule proceeds upon this allowed Maxim, that of two Evils the leaſt is always to be choſen. Wherefore,

2. To make the Objection any thing to the Purpoſe, it muſt ſtand thus; That becauſe the Conſequences which will ordinarily happen from Magiſtrates making uſe of an Authority given them to ſupport *true* Religion, toward the encouraging

couraging *falſe* Religions, are ſuch, that upon the whole it would be *better* for Religion, if Magiſtrates had *no ſuch* Authority given them; therefore no ſuch Authority *ought* to be given them. And if this be what our Adverſaries would ſay, the Concluſion indeed will be juſt, but then the Premiſes are certainly falſe; or at leaſt will contain a great deal more than can be proved to be true. For how do they prove it? Why, as I ſaid before, by bidding us *look into the* Popiſh, Pagan, *and* Mahometan, *Countries.* Well; 'Tis done; And what do I ſee? Enough I own to move the Pity and and Indignation of every ſerious and good Man. But yet I am not certain (nor do I think it poſſible for them to ſhew me) that if there never had been any Publick Proviſion made for the ſupport of Religion by Civil Magiſtrates, the State of Religion throughout the World would not have been in a far more deplorable Condition, than it is now under all the Corruptions above mentioned. For by theſe Proviſions a general Senſe of Religion and of Morality, an Awe for a ſupreme inviſible Power, which is the Foundation of all Religion, are, amidſt all the Corruptions ſo much complain'd of, tolerably preſerved. If any Man thinks otherwiſe let him compare the State of Religion in *Turky*, *China*, or any Civilized Country, with the Religion of the *Hottentots*, who are as free from all reſtraints of Civil Power, as they are from all ſenſe of Religion. The ſame thing may be ſaid of *Chriſtianity*, which, if left deſtitute of all ſupport from Human Laws, might (for ought that appears at leaſt to the contrary) have by this Time been every where degenerated into a Superſtition worſe than that of *Popery*. But this is a

Point

Point which I have no need to diſpute; becauſe I am not bound, nor indeed is it right, to make an eſtimate of thoſe Conſequences which will ordinarily happen from the miſapplication of Power, from what has happen'd in *Turky*, or in *Spain*, or elſewhere. The Competition at preſent is between *an Eſtabliſhment* and *no Eſtabliſhment*. Now 'tis plain that the bad Conſequences which are viſible in thoſe Countries, have ariſen not merely from hence, that every Magiſtrate has eſtabliſhed his own Religion; but from ſome *particular Way* or *Manner* of eſtabliſhing Religion, which as yet I am at full Liberty either to approve of, or to condemn. There may be *ſome* ways of providing for the ſupport of Religion, the Conſequences of which, may (for ought I know) be worſe than the Conſequences of no Proviſion at all. Let us ſuppoſe *Dragooning*, *Impriſoning*, *Burning*, and the like, to be of this ſort. But as it is evident that theſe Methods are not eſſential to an Eſtabliſhment; 'tis obvious alſo that what concludes againſt the former, will not therefore conclude againſt the latter. It may be true that *ſome ſorts* of Eſtabliſhments are wrong; but it will not follow from thence that there ought to be no Eſtabliſhment *at all*.

To draw this Point then towards a Concluſion; I ſay in a few Words, that the true way of computing the Difference in this Caſe, will be to conſider every particular Way, by which true Religion may be ſuppoſed capable of being ſupported and encouraged; and ſee what will be the Conſequence in caſe the ſame Methods be made uſe of to promote Error. This will be more diſtinctly ſpoken to in the next Chapter, wherein the ſeveral Branches of the Magiſtrates Authority will be particularly treated of. At preſent

preſent we are only conſidering Eſtabliſhments *in general*, which in the moſt ſimple and abſolute Notion muſt (as I have often hinted) be underſtood to imply one or other of theſe two Things, *viz.* A Right in the Magiſtrate to make a Publick Proviſion for the *Adminiſtration* of *Inſtruction*; and a Right alſo to apply *Outward Reſtraint*, as a Check to the Careleſneſs and Wantonneſs of Men. Either of theſe by itſelf will create what may be termed an *Eſtabliſhment*: tho' an Eſtabliſhment will be much better by the former without the latter, than by the latter without the former. But as they are ſubſervient the one to the other; ſo *that* Eſtabliſhment will be moſt perfect where they both of them ſubſiſt together. Theſe two Particulars muſt therefore in general be cleared from the preſent Objection. And as to the firſt, I think there can be no pretence in ſaying that the Conſequences of *Inſtruction*, ſuppoſing it to be promiſcuouſly applied both for and againſt the Truth, will be worſe than the Conſequences of *no* Inſtruction, *i. e.* (for it will at laſt come almoſt to the ſame Thing) of no Publick Proviſion made for Inſtruction. For the one Method tends only to the promoting of Error among ſome Perſons, and in ſome Places; whereas the other paves the Way to univerſal Ignorance and Depravity of Manners. According to my Rule (ſay you) as a *Proteſtant* Magiſtrate will be obliged to provide that his Subjects be inſtructed in the *Proteſtant Religion*; ſo a *Popiſh* Magiſtrate will be obliged to provide that his be inſtructed in the Doctrines of *Popery*; and a *Mahometan* that his be inſtructed in the Doctrines of *Mahomet*. Very true. But better is it that Chriſtianity be taught ſomewhere, than that it be taught no

where

where. Better to have Religion, tho' blended with ſome falſe and corrupt Notions, than to have no Religion at all. The like may be ſaid of *Outward Reſtraint*, which may be ſo adapted as to the *Degree* and *Meaſure* of it; that ſuppoſing it every where made Uſe of alike, it will *upon the Whole*, and *in the Concluſion*, be more for the Intereſt of Religion, than if, being wholly laid aſide, every Man were left free without check or controul to follow the bent of his own Paſſions. The great Objection is, that *Outward Reſtraint* ſtops the way to all *Reformation* where it is wanting: And whatever Method has this Effect is moſt certainly wrong; becauſe it is to be apprehended that the Miſapplication of ſuch a Method will ordinarily do more Miſchief, than the right Uſe of it will do good. But if this be the Caſe of *ſome* kinds of Outward Reſtraint only, and not of *all:* If *ſuch* a Check may be given to thoſe who differ from the National Religion, as will be of great Service where Truth is encouraged; and yet leave room for the beating down of Error in thoſe Countries where it happens to be eſtabliſhed in the room of Truth: If this I ſay be the Caſe, I ſhould hope it will be allowed that the Objection is ſufficiently anſwered. And that this *is* the Caſe, will be ſhewn (as I ſaid before) when we come to determine the preciſe boundaries of the Magiſtrates Authority. In the mean while, what would follow from an *abſolute Indulgence*, we may be allowed to conjecture from what has ever happen'd, where ſuch an Indulgence has been admitted of. In the *Heathen* World human Invention was very much indulged; the Conſequence of which, was that Gods were multiplied without Number, and Superſtition encreaſed

creaſed without End. Theſe Corruptions perhaps you will charge to the want of proper Inſtruction: But what will you ſay to the Corruptions which have grown up under the Profeſſion of the Goſpel? The Goſpel itſelf is the beſt Inſtruction, yet it was ſoon polluted in it's Doctrines, as well as in it's Practices: And 'tis obſervable that the firſt 300 Years produced a greater variety of monſtrous and abſurd Opinions, than have been produced in above a Thouſand ſince. The Reaſons of this have heretofore been open'd at large; and it is not needful now to repeat them: For in ſhort every Man of common Obſervation, muſt agree that an *abſolute Indulgence* muſt ever be attended with bad Conſequences. Now if there be any Method of applying *Outward Reſtraint* by which theſe Conſequences will either wholly, or in a good Degree, be avoided, and no Evils ariſe ſufficient to Ballance them on the other ſide, (which is what I hope to ſhew;) the Reaſonableneſs of empowering the Magiſtrate to make uſe of ſuch a Method, will no longer bear the being diſputed. Wherefore,

III. Having thus removed the moſt conſiderable Objections, thoſe which follow will be anſwer'd with leſs Difficulty. It is ſaid then, that "the annexing the Motives of this World "to the Profeſſion of any particular Religion, "is a great Temptation to *Hypocriſy*;" and hence they argue, that "the Uſe of them ought "to be laid aſide." But this Argument is faulty in the ſame reſpect with the former, and may therefore be replyed to the ſame way. If it be a good Reaſon againſt the Uſe of Worldly Motives, that they may be drawn into an *Occaſion* of *Sin*; it muſt be as good a Reaſon againſt

every thing which may be drawn into an *Occaſion* of *Sin*; in which way of reaſoning a hunder'd Things will be proved to be wrong, which yet no Man in his right Senſes ever imagined to be ſo. If a Child knows he ſhall be beaten for his Faults, this will be a Temptation to him to tell Lyes. But did ever any one think this to be a ſufficient Argument againſt Paternal Correction? But I will put another Caſe, which may be thought perhaps of greater Moment, and that is the Caſe of requiring an *Oath* as a *Teſt* or *Evidence* of Men's *Loyalty* and *Affection* to this *Government*, which is plainly liable to the ſame Exception. For is not the annexing *Civil Priviledges* to the taking of an *Oath*, as great a Temptation to a Man to *Swear* againſt his Conſcience; as the annexing the like *Priviledges* to his *going* to *Church*, or to his *receiving the Sacrament*, is to *conform* againſt his Conſcience? Have there not been as many led into *Perjury* by the former Method, as into *Hypocriſy* and *Prevarication* by the latter? And yet this is not allowed to be a ſufficient Objection againſt the *common* Practice of requiring Oaths, nor is it a ſufficient Objection in all Inſtances. The Truth in all theſe Caſes is one and the ſame; to wit, That where there are Reaſons ſufficient to juſtify the Uſe of any Means; the liableneſs of ſuch Means to be perverted to a bad End, is never to be regarded. To *do evil that good may come*, is what we cannot juſtify; nor ought we needleſly to lay thoſe *ſtumbling Blocks in our Brothers way*, which may *be unto him an Occaſion of falling*. But we *may*, yea, we *muſt*, do *good* tho' *evil* ſhould *happen*; and if that which contributes to the Advantage of *many*, ſhould be abuſed by a *few*, to their own Miſchief; they muſt bear the Weight

of

of it themſelves: Neither the *Means*, nor they who propoſe and make uſe of the *Means*, have any thing to do with it.

IV. It is farther alledged that "*Worldly Grandure*, great *Power* and *Riches*, naturally tend "to take Men's Minds from true Religion, and "the true Motives of it." The meaning of which I preſume is, that they tend to corrupt Men's Morals, and to make them careleſs in the Buſineſs of Religion. Hence we find a mortal Averſion to the being (*s*) *fed and pamper'd by Temporal Nurſes*, which if our Adverſaries ſpeak from their own feeling, we, as well as they, have Reaſon enough to wiſh that they were *taken down*. But if ſome Men's Heads turn round with being lifted up on High, it is to be hoped that this is not the Caſe of all: And yet we are told that (*t*) *the ſame Things muſt have ordinarily the ſame Effect, upon all ſorts of Men in this State of Probation*. What Novelties are here! Common Senſe would have ſaid that ordinarily the ſame Things have *different* Effects, according as Men are *differently Diſpoſed*. *Riches* and *Power* are the Gifts of God for great and excellent Ends, which ſome uſe as they ought, and others as they ought not. But whatever the Reſult of this be, the careful Reader will obſerve, that the Obſervation has no relation to the Point in hand; becauſe the Miſchiefs ariſing from the abuſe of theſe Things, will be the ſame under either Method. There would be juſt as much *Grandure*, *Power* and *Riches* in the

(*s*) Anſw. to Dr. *Snape*, p. 40.

(*t*) Ibid. *p.* 42.

World, tho' none of them were made uſe of to encourage true Religion, tho' 'tis likely they would not fall into the ſame Hands. But into whoſe Hands ſoever they might fall, they would have the ſame tendency to *take their Minds from true Religion*, unleſs you think that becauſe a Man embraces the true Religion, he is therefore the leſs qualified to make a proper Uſe of God's Bleſſings. I am not therefore able to ſee to what this Objection tends, unleſs it be to impeach the Providence of God, which it effectually doth; it being juſt as good an Argument to prove, that there ought to have been no ſuch Things as *Worldly Greatneſs*, *Power*, and *Riches*, as that the Magiſtrate ought not to make uſe of them for the ſupport of Religion. So that if they do not mean this, let them confeſs their Miſtake: But if they do, I pray God give them a better Mind; that if he hath dealt with them (as he does with the very beſt of us) better than they deſerve, they may acknowledge his Goodneſs with Thankfulneſs, and not, like pamper'd Horſes, kick and ſpurn at him that feeds them.

V. Laſtly, (for this is the only remaining Cavil) It has been alledged that "Becauſe Al-
"mighty God has annexed the Sanctions of
"another and a future State to Chriſt's Laws;
"*this is the very Reaſon* why worldly Sanctions
"ſhould *not* be annexed to them: Becauſe of
"two ſorts of Motives, without doubt perfect
"Wiſdom chuſes the moſt proper Sort." But to this a ſhort Anſwer will ſuffice, *viz.* That perfect Wiſdom may chuſe a *variety* of Motives, all of them proper in their reſpective Places and Degrees: And that his having choſen the Motives of another World, carries not with it

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ſo much as the Face of an Argument to ſhew that he hath not alſo choſen the Motives of this. If you ſay that God hath not choſen the Motives of this World, it ſhall be admitted for Truth when you have proved it. But you cannot, I ſay, prove it merely from this Conſideration, that he hath choſen the Motives of another. For my chuſing a Means in order to a certain End, doth not imply that to be the *only* Means which I have choſen. To ſave you then all farther trouble, I maintain that in order to ſupport and encourage true Religion, God *hath* choſen the Motives of this World, as well as the Motives of another. Nor can it be denyed, if it be true that he hath made it to be the Magiſtrates *Duty* to apply theſe Motives for the ſupport and encouragement of true Religion. Whether therefore this be true, or whether it be not true, I muſt leave the Reader to judge from the Arguments that have already been, and which ſhall hereafter be, laid before him.

CHAP. V.

Wherein the Authority of the Magiſtrate in Matters of Religion is more diſtinctly and particularly conſidered.

I HAVE now done with this Point in general; and the Concluſion comes to this, and no more than this, *viz.* That the Magiſtrate, as ſuch, has a Right, by the Methods of Civil Adminiſtration, to ſupport and encourage true Religion, both *Natural* and *Revealed.* And in order to this End that he hath Authority, at

the Publick Expence, to provide that *Inſtruction* be duly and regularly adminiſtred to the People; and to apply *Temporal Motives* on the ſide of true Religion, in ſuch a Sort as may be proper to check and reſtrain the Inordinate Paſſions of Men. But by what ways he is to provide for the Adminiſtration of *Inſtruction*, and how far he may go in the Uſe and Application of *Worldly Motives*, are Queſtions which ſtill afford Matter for a more diſtinct Inquiry. For Differences may ſometimes ariſe from ſpecial Reaſons, and particular Caſes may be aſſigned, which ſhall ſtand excepted from general Rules.

Theſe Points therefore muſt be minutely enter'd into. And as a Foundation for the whole, it will be proper to obſerve, That the Rule or Law, to which the ſupreme Power in any Commonwealth is ſubject in the Execution of his Office is, 1. The Univerſal Law of Reaſon, either alone by itſelf, or aſſiſted by the Light of Revelation: And, 2. Thoſe *Human Appointments* (if any ſuch there are) which have been agreed upon by the whole Body as the Groundwork of their Polity, and the Conditions upon which they have conſented to become a Society under ſuch a particular Head or Supreme Governour. Theſe *previous Appointments*, I ſay, do ſo far bind the Magiſtrate, that without the Conſent of the whole Society, he cannot lawfully act in oppoſition to them. But with theſe we have at preſent nothing to do. For the Queſtion being concerning the Authority of the ſupreme Power *at large*, and not as limited by the particular Conſtitutions of particular Commonwealths; It muſt therefore be conſidered as ſubject to no other Laws, than thoſe which are common to every Society as ſuch, *i. e.* to the

the Law of Reaſon only: Which, if the Perſon or Perſons in whom ſuch ſupreme Power is veſted, contradict, they are guilty of a Breach of their Duty, *Firſt*, to God, whoſe Law, the Law of Reaſon is; and *Secondly* to their Subjects, who are reaſonable Creatures, and cannot therefore be preſumed to have conſented to be governed any otherwiſe than as reaſonable Creatures ought to be governed.

This being premiſed, I come to the particulars under Conſideration. And as to the firſt, to wit, the providing for the due Adminiſtration of *Inſtruction*, 'tis evident, as has afore been noted, that there are divers Ways in which it may be done. The ſettling a Maintenance for *Parochial Preachers*; erecting *Schools*, and other *Publick Nurſeries* of good Literature, and pious Education; and the protecting and encouraging thoſe who are willing to contribute towards carrying on ſuch uſeful Deſigns, are all of them in their reſpective Orders and Degrees, Means proper to this End. Nor can any Exception in point of Lawfulneſs, lie againſt one more than againſt another. The ſame Reaſons which juſtify the firſt, will juſtify all the reſt; and it may be ſaid in general that the more is done in any of theſe Ways, ſo much the better. This only muſt be conſidered, That in making Proviſions of this Sort, a due Regard ſhould be had to the ſafety of the Commonwealth, as well as to the immediate Intereſts of Religion. The Teachers of Religion ſhould not be ſuffer'd to ſtruggle with Poverty, whilſt the State abounds in Wealth: Nor ſhould the Magiſtrate ſo far give way to an indiſcreet Zeal, as under the notion of doing Honour to God, to bring a real Miſchief upon the State (and in the End upon

Religion too) by being unreaſonably and immoderately profuſe in his Donations. A due Temper ſhould be preſerved between both Extreams, that whilſt as the Servants of God we rejoyce at the Encouragement that is given to the Labours of thoſe who miniſter to his Glory and our Common Salvation; we may not as the Subjects of Men, and as Members of Civil Society, find reaſon to complain of too much Penury. Religion as it ſerves to the good of all, has a very juſt Plea to be ſupported at the Publick Expence; but it ought not to be, nor indeed can it be, ſupported, by Publick Extravagancy. For this weakens the State; and it is evident that in Proportion as the State grows unable to ſupport itſelf, it muſt grow unable to ſupport Religion. Theſe are plain Things, and therefore need not longer to be inſiſted on. I ſhall only add, That whatever Right the Legiſlative Power has over the Publick Stock; the ſame Right it has over all Benefactions, made or given by Private Perſons for the Publick Support and Encouragement of Religion. For theſe having a certain Influence either good or bad upon the whole Community; as they cannot be eſtabliſhed at firſt without the Magiſtrates Conſent, ſo they muſt for the ſame Reaſon be ſubject to his Regulations for ever afterwards.

By theſe Ways then the Magiſtrate has a Right to provide for the due Adminiſtration of Inſtruction, in the true Religion. And not only hath he a *Right*, but it is his *Duty*, both as the Servant of God, and the Guardian and Protector of the Commonwealth, thus to provide for it, ſo far as the Exigencies of the State will give him leave. Now this being admitted, it will not I conceive bear being diſputed, whether

ther he hath a Right alſo by the *ſame Methods*, equally to provide for the Adminiſtration of Inſtruction in ſuch *falſe Methods* of Religion, as may be ſet up in Oppoſition to the true. The Propoſal is at firſt Sight, ridiculous. For what is it but to ask whether the Magiſtrate hath not a Right to pull down with one Hand, what he is in Duty bound to build up with another? I ſpeak this of one and the ſame Magiſtrate, at the ſame Time, and in the ſame Country. For as to different Magiſtrates, either in the ſame or in different Dominions, they may be ſubject to different Rules. No Magiſtrate (as I have before ſhewn) can have properly a *Right* to encourage a *Falſe* Way of Worſhip: But, (which, ſo far as Human Conduct is concerned, will come to the ſame Thing) every Magiſtrate is *obliged* to encourage that Religion which he *believes* or *judges* to be the true; and conſequently it muſt be owned, and has been admitted, that if any Magiſtrate embraces a falſe Religion, he will be bound to provide that Inſtruction be adminiſtred for the ſupport of that falſe Religion, in the ſame manner as if it were the true. And this is a Caution which I muſt deſire the Reader conſtantly to bear in his Mind throughout this whole Chapter, *viz.* That whenſoever I maintain the Magiſtrates *Right* to make uſe of any Method for the ſupport of the true Religion; the *Obligation* to make uſe of *the ſame* Method in caſe Error happens to be received as Truth, is always ſuppoſed and taken for granted. Here all the Difficulties center, which attend upon the Queſtion, which 'tis my Deſign not to *avoid*; but, ſo far as I am able, to *remove:* And the Way to do it, as I obſerved above, will be to ſtate the Conſequences fairly on both ſides,

and

and ſee on which ſide the Advantage lies. How the Account ſtands as to other Particulars, will be conſider'd with reſpect to each of them as they come in courſe. But as to *this*, having before remarked it as an evident Truth, that the Conſequences which would ariſe from the *want* of *Inſtruction* (which in the ordinary State of the World will be prevented no other way than by theſe and ſuch like Publick Proviſions) are far worſe than thoſe which attend the *promiſcuous Uſe* of *Inſtruction*, both for, and againſt, the Truth: I look upon it to be entirely out of the reach of the Objection, and conſequently have no need to ſay any more to it here.

Thus much therefore being briefly ſpoken concerning the *firſt* of thoſe Methods by which the Magiſtrate may ſupport and encourage true Religion; I proceed now to the *other two*, which conſiſt in the Application of *Temporal Motives*, i. e. of *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* directly and immediately as a Means to curb and reſtrain Men's Paſſions, and thereby to provide that the People may attend upon the Inſtructions of their Teachers, and that ſuch Inſtructions may obtain their proper Effect. Now to avoid all ambiguities which may ariſe from the different Uſe of Words, it will be proper to acquaint the Reader, that by *Puniſhments* I underſtand all thoſe *Adminiſtrations* by which a Man is *moleſted*, *hurt*, or *vexed*, in any Matter or Thing, to the free Uſe and Enjoyment whereof, he hath antecedently a *Right* or *Property* either Natural or Civil; whether this Property concerns his *Life*, his *Body*, his *Liberty*, or his *Goods*. By *Rewards* on the other Hand, I mean thoſe whereby he is *obliged*, *pleaſed*, or *benefited* by any Thing which, without any ſuch *antecedent Claim*, he enjoys merely

merely thro' the *good Will* or *Favour* of the Donor. Of this latter ſort I reckon Poſts of *Honour*, *Profit* or *Power*, under the ſupreme Magiſtrate, which are very properly termed *negative Diſcouragements*, becauſe they do not conſiſt in inflicting *poſitive Evils*, but only in the *withholding* ſome *diſtant Good*, which otherwiſe a Man might have enjoyed. I ſuppoſe all this while ſome *moral Actions* either *good* or *evil*, *hurtful* or *beneficial*, *pleaſing* or *diſpleaſing*, as the Ground or Reaſon upon which a Man is *moleſted* or *gratified*: And this is what the common Uſe of Language leads us to ſuppoſe. If one Man *beats* another out of pure *wantonneſs*; He *wrongs* him indeed, but we do not ſay he *Puniſhes* him. And if I give an *Alms* to a poor Man who ſtands begging at my Door, you may ſay that I am *charitable* if you pleaſe, but you cannot ſay that I *reward* him.

Rewards and *Puniſhments* therefore in the Idea of them, always refer back to *Merit* and *Demerit*: And the Queſtion is, how far the *Adhering* to the true eſtabliſhed Religion is that *Merit* in Conſideration whereof the Magiſtrate may reaſonably confer *ſpecial Favours* and *Privileges*: And how far a *Departure* from, or *Oppoſition* to it, is that *Demerit* which will juſtify him in *moleſting* his Subjects, by depriving them of any *Right* either *Natural* or *Civil*. To ſtate this Matter clearly, it will be neceſſary to reſolve the whole into diſtinct Caſes. For that which is right in one Caſe, may not be ſo in another. I take it for granted that wherever there is a Right to apply *Puniſhments*, there is a Right alſo to make uſe of *Negative Diſcouragements*. For the greater always includes the leſs; and 'tis certainly *more* to *take away* from a Man what is already

already his own by a proper Right, than merely to *deny* him ſomething which as yet he hath not; and which to obtain is a Matter of *Grace* or *Favour*. Now ſince there are many Caſes in which the Uſe even of *Penal Laws* will, I preſume, be admited of without much Difficulty, I ſhall firſt mention theſe Caſes; and then come to the Point upon which the Controverſy between us and our Oppoſers, ſeems principally to depend. And,

I. The firſt is the Caſe of thoſe who either in *Doctrine* or in *Practice*, break in upon the Laws of *Natural* Religion. Concerning all which Perſons, I maintain in general and without Exception, that they may and ought to be chaſtiſed and ſuppreſs't by any ſeverity of Penal Laws, that ſhall be found neceſſary. The Reaſons are obvious. For, 1. Here is a manifeſt Injury done to the *State*, which cannot ſubſiſt but upon the Principles of moral Virtue and Honeſty. 2. Here is alſo an Affront offered to *God*, who having ſufficiently promulged the Law of Morality, by that general Reaſon which he hath given to Mankind; all Violations of that Law (except in thoſe who diſcover a manifeſt want of Underſtanding, and are therefore not to be conſidered in the Caſe) muſt be ſuppoſed to proceed from a Heart eſtranged from him. Since therefore (as has been ſhewn) the Nature of the Magiſtrates Office leads us to conſider him, both as the *Guardian* of the *Publick Civil Good*, and as the *Protector* of *God's Honour*; it is manifeſt that upon both theſe Accounts, he has a Right to puniſh all *Immoral Doctrines* and *Practices* whereſoever he finds them. For the ſame Reaſons I muſt alſo maintain,

II. That

II. That all Violations of the Laws of *Revealed* Religion whether in *Doctrine* or in *Practice*, which are *apparently* founded in a contempt of Religion, or ariſe evidently from vitious and immoral Inclinations and Habits, are Caſes puniſhable by the Civil Magiſtrate. Manifeſt and notorious Inſincerity ſeems to be of the ſame kind: For whatever Right a Man may have to act according to his Conſcience, he has certainly no Right to be a Knave. Nor are theſe Caſes always impoſſible to be diſtinguiſhed. For, 1. This is manifeſtly the Caſe of thoſe who admit the Revelation as true; and yet either vilify thoſe Doctrines which they profeſs to believe, or will not conform themſelves to that Rule or Law of Life which the Revelation propoſes. If a Man who profeſſeth himſelf a Chriſtian ſhould at any Time blaſpheme *Chriſt*; or acknowledge himſelf bound as a Chriſtian to frequent God's *Publick Worſhip*, and to partake of the *Sacrament*, and yet at the ſame Time live in an habitual Neglect of either or of both; no Man will ſay that he does not deſerve Correction. For either he is ſincere in his Profeſſion, or he is not. If he is ſincere, he is Self-condemned in acting contrary to his Profeſſion; and if he is not ſincere, but profeſſes the eſtabliſhed Religion purely for the ſake of ſome external Advantages; even his *Inſincerity* is a Fault which ought not to be excuſed. Under this Head we are to place all ſuch as give Publick Evidence of their Enmity to Chriſtianity, whilſt at the ſame time they regularly frequent the *Publick Aſſemblies* of *Chriſtians*, and (which I tremble to repeat) joyn in the moſt ſolemn and ſacred *Myſteries* of the Goſpel. Great Iniquity here is undoubtedly *ſomewhere*. If they are *Be-*

lievers,

lievers, they are the wickedeſt of Men. If they are *not*, who can juſtify their *profane Hypocriſy* in making a *ſhew* of *adoring* the Redeemer whom they *deſpiſe*? This is Iniquity even againſt *their own* Law, (if indeed they have *any* Law) the Law of Nature, which doth not admit of *Perfidiouſneſs* and *Lying* as in the preſence of the Almighty. One Thing then might be, and ought to be, required of them under the ſevereſt Penalties, *viz.* Either that they forbear to *profeſs* what they do not *believe*, or that they ceaſe to *affront* Him whom they are aſhamed openly to *deny*. As to thoſe who openly diſown the eſtabliſhed Revealed Religion, we cannot always ſo certainly pronounce concerning them, by what Motives they are influenced. Their Private Conduct may indeed many Times afford ground for very ſtrong Preſumptions: But this being ſuch (for the moſt part) as wiſe Men may better obſerve, than Magiſtrates appeal to; it can have little to do in the preſent Diſpute. One thing however I muſt not forget to mention, as an evident Token both to the wiſe and to the unwiſe; to the Magiſtrate as well as to the People, of an evil and corrupted Mind; and that is, 2. When Men oppoſe Points of Revealed Religion not in the way of *modeſt* and *ſober Reaſoning*, but by turning them into *Ridicule* and *Drollery*. This is a Practice not to be endured in any well-governed Commonwealth, as what both in it's Cauſe, and in it's Effects, bears too near an alliance with Blaſphemy and Profaneneſs. And ſurely if any thing can provoke the Divine Juſtice to abandon a Nation, and to give them up to feed on the Fruits of their own vanity and wickedneſs; it muſt be when his Honour is ſo little ſet by, that Men cannot adjuſt

adjuſt thoſe Differences which ariſe among themſelves concerning his Worſhip, with the ſame Decency and good Manners, that Modeſty leads us to obſerve in ſettling the common Affairs of Life. The Majeſty of God gives a Sanction to every thing that has any tolerable Pretence to ſhelter itſelf under his Authority, ſo far, at leaſt, as to ſecure it from being inſulted: And there is this reſpect due to the Judgment of our Superiors; that if we cannot think them in the Right, we ſhould not treat them as if they were Fools.

By this, the Reader may already conjecture that I am not againſt allowing free Liberty to the Subject, to queſtion any eſtabliſhed *Opinion* or *Doctrine* of *Revealed Religion*, which they ſhall judge to be falſe; and to offer their Reaſons againſt it, provided it be done with a fit Temper and in a proper Way. To ſpeak my mind freely and without Reſerve: The thing is upon all Accounts juſt and equitable: For the Magiſtrate being fallible as well as others, he ought not obſtinately to ſhut his Eyes againſt new and better Light; and 'tis certain that Truth will ſuffer more when Errors are rejected with too much ſtiffneſs, than when they are brought to a ſerious and impartial Examination. But ſtill I ſay, that there is a certain *propriety* and *decorum* in offering Opinions to the Tryal which the Magiſtrate hath an undoubted Right to inſiſt upon. For all Ways, are not alike either hurtful or beneficial: And if a Man be but fairly heard, in what Way ſoever it be, that he is heard, he will have no Reaſon to complain. Wherefore,

III. There is one thing more which I would beg leave to ſuggeſt, as a Matter not unworthy the Conſideration of our Superiors; and that

is whether *ſome* kind of Reſtraint guarded by *Penal Laws* ought not to be laid upon ALL Publick Oppoſers of Revealed Truths, any where eſtabliſhed. And the Reaſon of my asking the Queſtion is, becauſe it appears to me, that *Popular Appeals*, as they are commonly practiced, are both wrong in themſelves, and in their Conſequences more hurtful than beneficial to the Intereſts of Religion. As to the firſt, It ſhould ſeem moſt agreeable to decency and good Order, that when any Man thinks, that he has any thing of Moment to offer towards the reforming what he judges to be amiſs; he ſhould firſt apply himſelf to the Magiſtrate, or to ſome Perſon or Perſons purpoſely commiſſioned by him, to receive Appeals of this Nature; and that the Queſtion ſhould be conſidered in ſuch a manner as he, or they, ſhould judge to be moſt expedient. By this Means many needleſs and frivolous Diſputes would be avoided: Many material ones, probably, ſettled in a more private Way; and abundance of that Miſchief prevented, which naturally and unavoidably attends an unbounded Licence to every Man to vend Crudities of any ſort indifferently to all. Be Errors ever ſo abſurd in themſelves, the Poiſon will find it's way into weak and ſickly Conſtitutions. Wiſe and good Men expect wiſe Arguments; but weak ones will ſatisfy the ignorant, the fooliſh, and the wickedly diſpoſed. Now to this Evil on the one Hand, I find no Good that can be oppoſed on the other, unleſs it be the Benefit which may accrue to the Truth from ſuch a Liberty, in caſe Error happens to be eſtabliſhed in it's room. But with this Objection I have nothing to do. For what I plead for is, not that *Popular Appeals* ſhould be *abſolutely*

lutely forbidden, (which is the only reaſonable Ground upon which the Objection can proceed;) But, that, where Differences ariſe concerning any Point of Religion, any where eſtabliſhed, the Magiſtrate ought to have the Liberty of the *firſt Hearing*, in order, if it be poſſible, to cut off all Neceſſity of appealing to the Publick; which in a greater Degree or in a leſs, is ever attended with Inconveniencies. This Limitation perhaps may ſeem of little Uſe to us as Matters now ſtand; and I do not mention it as practicable in our preſent Circumſtances. But if there were in every Eſtabliſhment, (as in every Eſtabliſhment there ought to be) a *conſtant Court* to receive Complaints of all growing Corruptions in the *Doctrine* and *Practice* of *Religion*, as there are *proper Places* to complain of all *Civil Grievances* and *Diſorders*; I make no doubt but we ſhould ſoon feel the Advantages of ſuch a Method: And if after this there ſhould be Liberty allowed of appealing to the whole World, by a faithful and honeſt Repreſentation of the Reaſons, and of the Reaſons only, on both Sides, in caſe Differences could not this way be brought to an Accommodation; I ſee not, for my Part, what it is that a reaſonable Man could deſire more. For here is all the Liberty allowed to Truth, that Truth can want; and this juſt and equitable Reſtraint only, laid upon Error, that ſhe ſhall not be ſuffer'd to foreſtall the Opinions of Men, nor by a haſty and partial View draw that Eſteem to herſelf, which in a fair way of reckoning ſhe would be found not to deſerve.

Whether ſuch a Liberty as this ought to be allowed of, and how far it may be ſubject to farther Limitations, is a Point which I do not

now determine, but which ſhall be conſidered by and by. In the mean Time that which has hitherto been advanced under this Head cannot, I think, eaſily be found Fault with: He who ſhould complain of ſuch a Method, if once our Governours ſhould think fit to eſtabliſh it, would affect an Indulgence; which even the tendereſt Concern for the Liberty of the Subject will never juſtify. In Matters of a *Civil* Nature, the Thing is plain and evident. For what Government can be at eaſe, if every one be permitted to talk and write againſt the Deciſions of his Superiors, in what manner he pleaſes? To obſtruct all Ways which lead to the removal of Publick Grievances, is the Spirit of *Tyranny*, which in it's Conſequences muſt end in *Slavery* and *Oppreſſion*. But to throw all Ways open at once, and to leave every one to chuſe that which liketh him beſt, is on the other Hand the Spirit of *Weakneſs*, and as naturally leads to *Diſorder* and *Confuſion*. Let Governours then be apprized of all Evils and Corruptions in the State, whether New or Old. But how? Why by ſuch Ways as they ſhall judge to be moſt conducive to the Publick Safety; which certainly will be in a very ill Condition, if the Mob is to be raiſed about their Ears, whenever any conceited Upſtart ſhall think himſelf wiſe enough to mend the Conſtitution.

As this which I have mentioned is the only Method of keeping up a due Diſtinction between *Superiors* and *Inferiors*; ſo 'tis a Method which, in a greater Degree or in a leſs, has ever been obſerved in all well-conſtituted Commonwealths. And where, I ask, would be the Harm, or rather what Good might we not expect, if the ſame Temper were followed in Things which

pertain

pertain to Religion? What if our Religious News-writers, who deal out their low and wretched Divinity by ſcraps, and turn the moſt ſerious and weighty Queſtions concerning God and his Worſhip, into a *Coffee-Houſe* Entertainment; what if our forward and buſy *Pamphleteers*, who make merchandize of the Ignorance and Credulity of the Vulgar, and by their indigeſted Conceptions in Matters which they underſtand not, corrupt their Principles and Morals both; what, I ſay, if theſe and ſuch like peſtilent Diſturbers of the Peace of the World, were laid under a Prohibition, and (one orderly Way of opening and conſidering all ſorts of Religious Controverſies being ſettled by Publick Authority) *Libels* againſt the *Church* were puniſhed with the ſame Severity as *Libels* againſt the *State?* Certainly if there be any thing in the World which Men ought to enter upon with a ſerious Temper of Mind, and an humble dependance upon the Divine Grace; it is the conſidering the Grounds of their Faith, and the chuſing for themſelves that Religion, which among the great variety of Religions they ſee about them, appears to be moſt agreeable to the Will of God. But is this the Buſineſs of a *Coffee-Houſe* or of a *Tavern*, when Men come Hot from the *Market* or from the *Exchange*; when their Heads are full of their Worldly Concerns; when they are half Aſleep or perhaps half Drunk: Is this, I ſay, a Time when they are to be call'd upon to ſit as Judges in the Affairs of their Souls, and their everlaſting Salvation! I truſt in God we ſhall once ſee the Day, when it will be thought proper and ſeaſonable to give ſome Check to this prevailing Evil. The Miſchief which ſuch Liberties bring

upon Religion is but too viſible in that growth of Infidelity and Profaneneſs, which good Men, with Reaſon enough, lament and complain of in theſe Days. And I muſt take leave to ſay, that ſcarce any Thing will excuſe the Indulgence of them, but ſuch an unhappy Poſture of Affairs, as lays a Neceſſity upon the Magiſtrate to wink at many Things, which otherwiſe would be (as indeed they ought to be) reformed.

You may think perhaps that I am laying an unreaſonable Burden upon the Magiſtrate, and thoſe who act as Miniſters under him, whilſt I oblige them to attend the Motions of all who may at any Time be diſpoſed to innovate in Matters of Religion. Be not afraid. The Difficulty is not ſo great as you may imagine. The Caſe is this; That by the Method which I now propoſe, all Controverſies in Divinity would be entirely removed from the Hands of impertinent and mercenary Scriblers, into the Hands of Men of Senſe and Learning; who as they are the only Perſons fit to manage ſuch Controverſies, ſo they would in common Decency and for their own Credit ſake, forbear to make Appeals, but where the real weight and importance of the Cauſe would juſtify them in ſo doing. Small Grievances are better born with, than ancient and ſtanding Cuſtoms laid aſide: And if the Magiſtrate would do his Duty in removing great ones; he would ſoon find that he might keep the State of Religion in a quiet and eaſy Poſture, with as little Trouble as he manages the common Affairs of State. But ignorant Men, you'll ſay, have their Scruples as well as the wiſe and learned. Very true. But there is no Neceſſity I hope that ignorant Men ſhould ſet themſelves up either for *Divines* or *Polititians*. If their Scruples be of any Weight, they will not want

want Men of greater Abilities to patronize their Cauſe. And if they be of ſo little Conſequence, that 'tis not worth while to trouble the Magiſtrate with them; there will certainly be as little Reaſon why they ſhould trouble the World.

Theſe Caſes being reſolved, in which (as I conceive) the Uſe even of *Penal Laws* will be admitted without much Difficulty; I now proceed to another, which the Laſt naturally makes way for, and which leads directly to the main Point in Controverſy. And the Caſe may be thus ſtated, *viz.*

IV. What if an Appeal being made to the Magiſtrate, and the Queſtion conſidered in a proper Way; the Perſon who makes the Appeal cannot be, or (which is all one) declares he is not, by the Reaſons offered, convinced of his Error? There are but three Ways poſſible in this Caſe. For the Magiſtrate may either, 1. Uſe *Force* to oblige him to *retract* his Opinions. Or, 2. He may enjoyn him *Silence*. Or, 3. He may ſuffer him to *publiſh* his Doctrines to the World, and make Converts as he is able. Now if any one would know my Judgment concerning the firſt of theſe three Methods, I very freely declare that I think it abſolutely unlawful. The Magiſtrate has no Right to oblige any Man (in the Circumſtance ſuppoſed) to *retract* his Opinions, even tho' they be erroneous: And the Reaſon is plain, *viz.* Becauſe much Evil may be done on the one ſide, and no good can follow on the other. If a Man be conſtrained by outward Force to retract his Opinion, whilſt his Underſtanding remains unconvinced; he is conſtrained to act againſt his Conſcience, which is a great Evil. And this may frequently be the Caſe. Now what good can be expected

from ſuch a Recantation? Plainly none at all. For all the Virtue of a Recantation lies in this, that it takes off the Influence which the Authority of that ſingle Man's Judgment would have upon others: And this indeed it will do, when the Recantation appears to be hearty and ſincere. But a *diſingenuous* Recantation (which every *forced* Recantation will be preſumed to be) can have no ſuch Effect The requiring ſuch a Recantation ſhews indeed the Magiſtrates Opinion, which may be as well made known by other Methods: But the Recantation itſelf not being the reſult of Liberty and Choice, will be no Evidence of what the Sufferer believes or judges. If a Man in ſuch a Caſe as this ſhould declare himſelf *convinced*; the Magiſtrate might very reaſonably require him to make the ſame Declaration to the World. In this there is no Hardſhip; and certainly it is but common Juſtice that when a Man has done an Injury, he ſhould be obliged to make the beſt Amends he can. But, this Caſe excepted, to *force* Men to retract Errors, is a great Hardſhip not only upon Fleſh and Blood, but upon Conſcience too, and anſwers no good End or Purpoſe which may not as well be ſecured without it.

This Method then being ſet aſide, the Competition will lie only between the other Two, *viz.* Whether the Magiſtrate ought to ſuffer ſuch a Man to publiſh his Opinions, and to make Converts as he is able; or whether he hath a Right to enjoyn him Silence. And concerning this Matter, the Reader may thus far have underſtood my Mind aforehand, that I am inclinable to favour the ſide of Liberty. The Reaſonableneſs of this, I conceive, will hardly be queſtioned, upon Suppoſition that ſuch Opinions

create

create no *Separation* from the National Religion. For this ſhows that in the Judgment of both Parties, the Difference is of little or no Conſequence to Religion, and therefore beneath the Magiſtrates Concern. But if thoſe who publiſh falſe Opinions are, in virtue of ſuch falſe Opinions, *ſeparated*, or do *ſeparate themſelves*, from the National Way of Worſhip, into ſome *other* Way different from it, the Caſe will require ſome farther Conſideration: And we are brought at laſt to the main Point in Controverſy, Which,

V. Concerns thoſe, who, (the true Way of Worſhip being eſtabliſhed by Law,) ſet up, or joyn in, ſome falſe Way in Oppoſition to it. Now that the Reader may the more clearly and diſtinctly perceive the real Merits of the Cauſe between us, there are theſe Things to be noted concerning the State of the Queſtion, *viz.*

1. That the Difference between thoſe of the National Religion and thoſe who ſeparate from it, is ſuppoſed to relate to Matters of *pure Revelation* only; that is either to Points of Chriſtian *Faith* or of Chriſtian *Practice*, in reference to thoſe Laws either of Religious *Worſhip* or Religious *Diſcipline*, which the Goſpel hath ſuperadded to the Law of Nature. For with reſpect to *Moral* Duties there can be no Difference among reaſonable Men; and it hath been already ſhewn, and is on all Hands agreed, that all *Immoralities* are puniſhable by the Magiſtrate. Let it farther be ſuppoſed

2. That the *Principles* in virtue of which falſe Ways of Worſhip are ſet up in Oppoſition to the true, are ſuch as have no tendency to hurt or to overturn *Civil Government*. For it is certain that all ſuch Religions may be, and ought

to be, ſuppreſſed upon a *Civil* Account, *i. e.* for the ſake of *Civil Society*; the Right of ſupporting which, cannot be ſuſpended or taken away, by any ſcruples of Conſcience real or pretended. To make the Caſe yet clearer, let it alſo be ſuppoſed,

3. That no *Civil Diſorders* are occaſioned by Differences about Religion. For when ever ſuch Diſorders do ariſe, the Magiſtrate hath an undoubted Right to ſuppreſs them; I will not ſay, by uſing Force to remove the *Differences* which occaſion thoſe Diſorders (which is ſeldom neceſſary;) But, (which will ordinarily be ſufficient) by puniſhing the Diſorders *themſelves*, i. e. thoſe who are concerned in ſuch Diſorders.

The Queſtion then at laſt comes to this, *viz.* "What ſhall the Magiſtrate do with thoſe, who "(for ought that appears to the contrary) ha- "ving uſed a reaſonable Care to inform and "ſatisfy themſelves, and being chargeable with "no indecent or improper Ways of queſtion- "ing eſtabliſhed Doctrines, differ from thoſe "of the National Religion as to ſome Points of "pure Revelation; and in virtue of ſuch Dif- "ference in Opinion, do, without any hurt or "prejudice to the State as to it's Civil Con- "cerns, ſet up or joyn in different Ways of "Worſhip?" This, I ſay, is the Queſtion; and a Queſtion it is (I very freely own) of great Difficulty as well as Importance. It is ſuppoſed, you ſee, in the Caſe, that Men may *honeſtly* differ in their Opinions about Points of Revealed Religion; and this indeed is neceſſary to be ſuppoſed, becauſe otherwiſe it would admit of no Diſpute. For (as the learned Dean of *Chicheſter* has obſerved) "were Religion in gene- "ral —— one plain uniform Thing about "which

" which there was no more Room to diſagree, " than there is about the Law of Reaſon and " Nature in *Moral* Points; —— there would be " nothing with reſpect to Religion left to the " Magiſtrate, but to uſe his Power to enforce " Obedience." (*a*) The Reaſon is plain, *viz.* Becauſe there can be no hardſhip in compelling Men to do, what they are *obliged* to do, in virtue of the Reaſon and Underſtanding which God has given them. But the Caſe is this, That the Knowledge of the Doctrines of *Revealed* Religion coming to us by another kind of Evidence, than that whereby we receive the Knowledge of the Doctrines of *Natural* Religion: What thro' weakneſs of Judgment in ſome, and what thro' habitual Prejudices and Prepoſſeſſions in others, Men have differed, do differ, and ('tis to be apprehended) always will differ concerning them. But then ſince the Evidences of *Revealed* Religion, tho' not the ſame with the Evidences of *Natural* Religion, are yet ſufficient to convince; it muſt alſo be ſaid (and it is equally true in Fact) that as Men, notwithſtanding the beſt Care, may differ in their Opinions as to ſuch Points: So they may differ *for want* of Care, or *pretend* a Difference where there is *none*; and conſequently may ſeparate from the National Religion, not honeſtly and with a good Conſcience, or becauſe after due Examination they are really perſuaded that it is their Duty ſo to do; but thro' *Idleneſs* or *Wantonneſs*, to pleaſe their *Humours* and their *Fancies*, or (which is worſe) to ſerve ſome *Worldly Ends* which they have in View. This

(*a*) Anſw. to a Lr. *p.* 6.

is

is the Foundation of the whole Difficulty that attends upon the Queſtion; and that I may ſhew you preciſely wherein it lies, and withal ſet before you the true Point which every Magiſtrate ought to aim at, I muſt lay down the two following Propoſitions: That is to ſay,

PROPOSITION. I.

No Violence *ought to be offered to* Conscience. My meaning is (for this is the only Senſe in which Conſcience can be ſaid to ſuffer Violence) that *no* such Compulsion *ought to be uſed to bring Men to profeſs the* National Religion, (*even ſuppoſing it to be the* true Religion) *as will be ſufficient to lead them* (*unleſs they be endued with a more than ordinary Meaſure of Integrity and Reſolution*) *to act* against *Conſcience.*

This Propoſition I am ſenſible I need not prove to our Adverſaries, becauſe it contains nothing but what they contend for themſelves. But for the ſake of thoſe who may think I incline too far on the favourable Side, I ſhall offer a few Reaſons to ſupport it. And,

1. It muſt be conſidered that whatever Authority the Magiſtrate may be ſuppoſed to have to make Laws in matters of Religion, it is an Authority always *Subordinate* to the Authority of God; and conſequently that he can make no Law which ſhall oblige *all* Perſons, *abſolutely* and without Diſtinction to joyn in the National Way of Worſhip. All that he can in Reaſon require is, that all ſhould joyn in the National Way; who, conſiſtently with Conſcience, (*i. e.* conſiſtently with that *prior* and *ſuperior* Obligation which

which they are under with reſpect to God) *are able* to joyn in it; which implies a *Liberty* granted, (if that may be ſaid to be *granted* which cannot in juſtice be denyed) to thoſe who are *not able* to joyn in ſome other Way. Now this ſeems to me to cut off all Right of *Compulſion*: For what Right can the Magiſtrate have to *compel* thoſe whom he is either ſuppoſed not to *command*, or whom if he does command, he commands *without Authority?* You will ſay perhaps that it is true in *all* Caſes, as well as in this, that the Magiſtrate Rules only *in Subordination* to *God*; and conſequently that in virtue of this reaſoning it will be unjuſt to enforce Obedience even to a *Civil* Law, where there is Room to ſuppoſe that Conſcience may be concerned, and where Conſcience is actually pleaded as a Bar againſt his Authority. I Anſwer; And ſo it would if *Compulſion* were no more needful to ſupport *Civil Government*, than it is to ſupport *Religion*. But this cannot be pretended. For if when the Magiſtrate makes a Law for the good of the Commonwealth, it ſhould be admitted as a ſufficient Excuſe for a Man to ſay *I cannot obey, It is againſt my Conſcience*; there would at once be an End of his Authority, and all Government muſt fall to the Ground. Wherefore ſince a Conſent to the End always implies a Conſent to the Means neceſſary to that End; it muſt be ſuppoſed that every Member of the Society as ſuch, has in theſe Caſes ſubmitted his Will to the Will of the Magiſtrate; ſo far, I mean, as to have obliged himſelf either to obey the Law if he can, or to ſuffer the Penalty, if he cannot. But the Caſe is otherwiſe with reſpect to Religion: for the ſupport of which *Compulſion* is ſo far from being *neceſſary*, that it is

not

not ſo much as *proper*, as I will now ſhew you. For,

2. Foraſmuch as the ſame Methods which are allowed to be made uſe of to ſupport a *true* Way of Worſhip, muſt as well be allowed to be made uſe of to ſupport a *falſe* one, in Caſe it happens to be received *as* true; This Conſideration will bring thoſe who plead for *Compulſion* as a proper Method, under the whole Weight of the Objection drawn from the *Miſapplication* of Authority, the ill Conſequences whereof are with great Reaſon complained of. I have before laid it down as a Rule, that *Power* ought not to be put into the Magiſtrates Hand, if the Conſequences which may ordinarily be apprehended from the *Abuſe* of that *Power*, be as bad or worſe than thoſe which will follow from the *want* of it. Pray then conſider; what is the *Good* you propoſe by *Compulſion?* It is, ſay you, the hindering Separations from the true Religion. Well; This Effect it will undoubtedly have where Truth is eſtabliſhed. But then I think withal that this End will in the main, or in a very good Degree, be ſecured *without* Compulſion. For ſuppoſing the National Religion to be the true Religion; and ſuppoſing the Uſe of all other Methods to bring Men to embrace it: It is not likely that the Number of thoſe who ſeparate from it, will be very conſiderable; at leaſt we may ſay with a great deal of Aſſurance, that it will be incomparably leſs than the Number of thoſe who (if we may judge of what *will* be, by what *always has* been) will be hindered from embracing the Truth, by the Uſe of the ſame Method to encourage Falſhood. Whence it hath happened that the Profeſſors of falſe Religions have ever in point of Number had the Advantage of the

Profeſſors

Profeſſors of the true, it is not needful for me to inquire. The Fact is plain and undeniable: And in judging concerning Affairs of this Nature, Men ſhould always take the Meaſures from what they ſee before their Eyes, rather than from what they ought to be, or they could in Reaſon wiſh to find. So that, I ſay, as no Man *can* ſo far reſign his Will to the Will of the Magiſtrate, as to leave it to him to determine *abſolutely* what way of Worſhip he ſhall follow; ſo no Man *ought* to conſent to put ſuch an Authority of executing Penalties into his Hands, as inſtead of ſupporting Religion upon the whole, tends to deſtroy it, by introducing more and greater Miſchiefs than it is intended to cure.

This weight then muſt be allowed to the Objection, that it concludes ſtrongly againſt all *violent compulſive* Methods. And this I would have underſtood not only with Reſpect to ſuch Differences as may ariſe between *Chriſtians* and *Chriſtians*; but with Reſpect to thoſe alſo by which *Chriſtians* are diſtinguiſhed from thoſe who are *not* Chriſtians. You will ſay perhaps that what Room ſoever there may be for Men to diſpute about ſome particular Points of Chriſtianity; no Man can ſincerely reject *the Goſpel*: And this I freely confeſs, that ſuppoſing proper Abilities to judge, and that the Evidences for it are conſidered without Prejudice or Partiality, no Man *can* reject it. But 'tis hard to determine how far *Cuſtom*, *Education*, and ſome odd *preconceived* Notion, which Men innocently enough fall into, may pervert their Underſtandings: And this too muſt be remembred, that if none but *Chriſtians* are to be ſuffered in a *Chriſtian* Country; it will follow, that none but *Mahometans* muſt be ſuffer'd in a *Mahometan* Country; and the Difficulty will remain

remain juſt the ſame. I ſee no Remedy then but that the ſame Liberty muſt be allowed to both: And why ſhould we be afraid? Hath our Cauſe ſtood the Tryal for ſo many hundred Years; and ſhall we now at laſt betray a Miſtruſt, as if it could no longer be defended? Some Miſchief will certainly follow from this Liberty among the more weak and corrupted Part of Mankind. But it is better to truſt the Iſſue of this with the good Providence of God; than to have recourſe to a Method of preventing it, which if every where made Uſe of alike will lay the Foundation for a more general Calamity. I ſhall conclude this Head with a Paſſage of the moſt excellent *Grotius*, who ſpeaking of thoſe who pretended to juſtify the Uſe of Severities, from what was commanded with Reſpect to *falſe Prophets* and *Seducers* under the *Jewiſh Law*, hath theſe Words which contain the main Foundation upon which I build. *Sunt qui ſæviſſima quæq; defendunt*, Judaicæ Legis *Exemplo. Ut jam nihil dicam de Legis veteris novæq; diverſo Spiritu, Quos tandem ferit illa Lex? Nimirum eos qui malignisſimo propoſito hoc agebant ut Homines ab uno vero Deo abducerent, ab eo, inquam, Deo quem & Natura docebat, & tot Miracula aperte teſtabantur. At* Chriſtianæ Religionis *pleraq; non Natura nobis nota ſunt, ſed Cœleſti patefactione; & Miracula quibus olim ea Religio obſignata eſt, ad ſummam Doctrinæ pertinebant, non ad ſingula Capita quæ in Controverſiam veniunt.——— Hæc autem non eo dico animo, quod* [eos] *judicio eximere velim ——— qui, mentito Religionis Nomine, Bella excitant, aut Imperii ſtatum concutiunt. ——— Sed* Facta, *velim diſcerni ab* Opinationibus *ut quæ non æque ſunt* ἐφ ἡμῖν. (w) That is to ſay; " There are thoſe

(w) Annot. in Matt. 13. 41.

" who

" who defend the greateſt Severities upon the " Authority of the *Jewiſh Law*. To ſay nothing " here of the different *Spirit* of the *Law* and " the *Goſpel*, I will only ask whom does that " Law concern? Plainly, thoſe only who out " of a *malicious* and *wicked* Diſpoſition, made it " their Buſineſs to draw Men off from the Wor- " ſhip of the One true God, of *that* God, I " ſay, to whom they were directed by the Light " of *Nature*; and whoſe Authority had been " atteſted by ſo many Miracles. But the Do- " ctrines of the *Chriſtian* Religion are many of " them not diſcoverable by *Natural Light*, but " made known to us by *Divine Revelation* only: " And the Miracles by which this Religion was " heretofore confirmed, aſcertain to us indeed " the Truth of the Goſpel *in general*; but they " do not determine the Senſe of *particular* " *Doctrines*, which may happen to be controver- " ted among Chriſtians. I ſpeak not this to " exempt thoſe from Puniſhment, who under " *pretence* of Religion raiſe Tumults and ſhake " the Conſtitution of Commonwealths. But I " think *Actions* ſhould be diſtinguiſhed from mere " *Opinions*, as what are not alike *in our own* " *Power*." Theſe Words are too plain to admit of any Illuſtration, and therefore I proceed to my ſecond Propoſition; and let it be this,

PROPOSITION. II.

Although no Violence ought to be offered to CONSCIENCE; *Yet all* POSSIBLE CARE *ought to be taken to* RESTRAIN LICENTIOUSNESS; i. e. *to hinder thoſe from ſeparating from the* true National Worſhip, *who either are under* NO OBLIGATION

from

from Conſcience to ſeparate from it, or who, by an ordinary Care in the Uſe of proper Means to inform and ſatisfy themſelves, WOULD BE *under no ſuch Obligation.*

This Propoſition needs little Proof. For *not to hinder* a Thing *when* it is, or *ſo far* as it is, in our Power to hinder it, is to *tolerate* it: And to tolerate *Licentiouſneſs*, is to tolerate ſomething which will do much *hurt* under a *good* Eſtabliſhment, and *no ſervice* under a *bad* one. The only juſtifiable Plea for a Separation from the National Religion is *Conſcience*. If therefore thoſe who ſeparate upon a Principle of Conſcience, could certainly be known and diſtinguiſhed from thoſe who ſeparate either *without* or *againſt* Conſcience: The Rule to the Magiſtrate would be this, To *tolerate* the one, and to *puniſh* the other. But ſince this is impoſſible, ſome Expedient muſt be called in (if ſuch an Expedient can be found) to ſupply the defect. And this I ſay, if there be any ſuch kind of *Reſtraint* as cannot be ſuppoſed to affect or hurt a *ſerious Conſcience*, and yet may be ſuppoſed to be helpful towards *checking* the *Wantonneſs* or *Wickedneſs* of thoſe, who ſeparate from the National Religion upon Motives in which Conſcience hath no concern: The Magiſtrate (where no ſpecial Reaſons to the contrary intervene) hath an undoubted Right to make Uſe of ſuch *Reſtraint*; and that Method which beſt anſwers both theſe Ends is certainly the beſt Method.

You ſee now what is the true Point which every Magiſtrate ought to have in View. And in ſhort it is this; To diſcriminate between Men of Conſcience, and Men of no Conſcience, and

and not to ſuffer the Right of one to be uſurped by the other; the Liberty due to Conſcience to be made a cloak for Licentiouſneſs. Let no Man therefore ſuffer for Conſcience, nor let any Man of Conſcience complain if he HAPPENS to ſuffer in conſequence of ſuch a diſcriminating Law. Every Man's *Right* is ſubject to the Publick Good, and every Man in his Turn has his ſhare of this Burthen. The leſs any Man of Conſcience is expoſed to ſuffering by ſuch a Law, the better the Law will be: But to find out exactly where this *Medium* lies is very difficult, and may be to us perhaps impracticable. We muſt endeavour however to come as near it as we can, and that I may proceed clearly I ſhall conſider the Queſtion,

Firſt, With a View to *Negative Diſcouragements*. And,

Seeondly, With regard to *Penal Laws*.

Firſt then, Let us conſider the Queſtion with a View to *Negative Diſcouragements*. And as to this Point I ſay abſolutely and without Exception, That *in order to ſupport and maintain the true* NATIONAL RELIGION, *the Magiſtrate hath a Right to* EXCLUDE *all thoſe who* DISSENT *or* SEPARATE *from the* NATIONAL RELIGION, *from holding any* PLACE *or* OFFICE *of* TRUST *or* AUTHORITY *under him*. To make good this Aſſertion, two Things only are neceſſary, *viz.* 1. To prove that this Method upon the whole and in the concluſion, tends to the Advantage of Religion; and, 2. To ſhew that no particular Exceptions lie againſt the Uſe of it. To each of theſe I ſhall ſpeak diſtinctly. And,

1. Suppoſing the Religion encouraged to be the *true* Religion, the Advantage of this Method is plain and viſible: Or if any one doubts, he needs only to go back to what has been obſerved in the firſt Chapter of this Diſcourſe. Our buſineſs at preſent is to handle the Argument in a *comparative* Way, *i. e.* to conſider what will probably follow in caſe this Method be *every where* made Uſe of; and ſee whether thoſe Conſequences be ſuch as will make it adviſeable to lay it aſide. I have before obſerved that the great Objection againſt all Methods of this kind is, that they ſtop the Way to a *Reformation* where it is wanting: And it is very certain, that *ſomething* of this ſort will attend *every* Method of *any* kind that is good for any thing. Even *Inſtruction*, as has been ſhewn, does not ſtand quite clear of this Evil. For to infuſe wrong Principles into Men's Minds muſt neceſſarily fill them with Prejudices, which always makes it hard, and many times impoſſible for them to be convinced. So that if it be a ſufficient Objection againſt *any one* Method that it does *in ſome degree*, or *with reſpect to ſome Perſons*, tend to hinder a Reformation where it is wanting; it muſt be as ſufficient againſt *all* Methods; and you will be driven at laſt to this Abſurdity, even to ſay, That there ought to be *no* Method of encouraging Religion at all.

Some juſt *Medium* then there muſt be ſomewhere to be found. And the Way to come at it hath heretofore been ſhewn to be this, *viz.* To conſider what that Method is, which, avoiding the Evil of a total Neglect of Religion in the Magiſtrate (which is the greateſt Evil of all) both tends to ſupport Truth where *it is*, and leaves the Way open to a *Reformation* where it

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is not. I ſay *open*, i. e. ſo far open, as that there ſhall be nothing to hinder on the part of the Method, but that, under a tolerable State of the World, Truth ſhall by degrees as Men's Prejudices wear off, and their Paſſions cool, moſt generally prevail. It muſt be evident to any Man of common Underſtanding, that whatever Method will have this Effect, it muſt be a reaſonable Method: For the Tendency of ſuch a Method in the End and Concluſion is, to bring on (as the State and Condition of the World will admit of it) a *general Eſtabliſhment* of *true Religion* by *Human Laws:* And how deſireable a Thing that is, no wiſe and good Man needs to be told. What then is this Method? Why here too I may venture to ſay, that in general I have ſhown it you already. For what other Method *can* it be than *that* which leaving every ſerious Man at Liberty to act according to his *Conſcience*, miniſters only a Remedy to *Luſt* and *Appetite?* Under ſuch Liberty as this there will never be wanting Men of Senſe and Abilities, who will take Pains to beat down popular Errors: And if theſe Errors be of ſmall Conſequence, it will be of as little Conſequence whether they be reformed. But if they be groſs, they will certainly be ſeen; and the more they are ſeen, the more they will looſe Credit: And when once they come to be generally exploded, they will as generally be abandoned. I ſpeak this (as I ſaid juſt now) preſuming Mankind to be in a tolerable Condition as to *Morality* and a *general Senſe* of Religion. For when once it comes to that paſs, that generally ſpeaking Men have *loſt* all Senſe of Religion, and entirely given themſelves up to Senſuality and Worldly-mindedneſs; the Caſe is more than enough evident,

that the beſt Method you can think of will be without Effect. What Remedy would be equal to ſuch a deſperate Diſeaſe, it is hard to ſay: But thus much is certain, that it carries not with it ſo much as the *Appearance* of a Remedy for the Magiſtrate to give up all Care of Religion, and to leave every Man without Check or Reſtraint to do what is right in his own Eyes.

Thus much then being premiſed in general, I now apply my ſelf directly to the particular Method under Conſideration. And here in the firſt Place I think it plain beyond Contradiction, that the excluding *Diſſenters* from the National Religion, from all Offices of *Truſt* and *Authority* under the ſupreme Magiſtrate; as it gives a very conſiderable *Check* (ſo far as it goes) to *Licentiouſneſs* on the one Hand, ſo it carries with it no *oppreſſion* of *Conſcience* on the other. It muſt be a very tender Conſcience indeed, which cannot ſerve God in peace and quietneſs, unleſs it be ſuffered to reſt itſelf upon a Cuſhion of State. He who is not permitted to reap the Fruits of his own Labour, Skill, and Induſtry, may have juſt Reaſon to complain that he is *oppreſſed*. But 'tis abſurd to talk of *Oppreſſion*, when, *ſitting* undiſturbed *under his own Vine, and under his own Figtree*; the only matter of Complaint is this, That he is not v. g. *Mayor* of a *Corporation*, or a *Lord Juſtice* of the Realm; that is to ſay, when he has every Thing that he can call his own, and is only denied ſomething, which he has no Right to demand.

You will ſay perhaps, that tho' here is no *Oppreſſion* upon the Conſciences of thoſe who are excluded from Civil Offices; yet here is a *Bribe* offer'd to purchaſe the Conformity of thoſe who are willing to accept them. I anſwer that tho'

tho' this is very far from being intended by any good Magistrate; yet in *Effect* so it often happens: And I will add withal (if this will please you) the Temptation is so great, that, were it *possible*, it *ought not* to be laid in the Way of the *whole*, no nor of any *considerable Part* of the whole Society. If an effective Law could be made that all or the *Major* Part of those who should conform to the National Religion, should get Estates; I think that such a Law would be unwarrantable: Because tending to destroy all Integrity among Men, it would have almost as bad an Effect upon the general State of Religion throughout the World, as even Persecution itself. But the number of those who can fill or even *hope* to fill Offices of *Trust*, being (as has been said before) exceeding small in comparison to the whole Body or Society of Men; this very much alters the Case. True it is that here will still be a Temptation to those who are within the reach of it, to sacrifice their Consciences to their Worldly Interest. But this is *therefore* no Objection because the Evil is unavoidable. The general Good of Religion I say *requires* this Method; and if that which contributes to the Publick Advantage, shall be drawn into an Occasion of Private Mischief to some particular Persons, you have had my Answer already, that the Blame lies upon those who are guilty of the Abuse, and that neither the Magistrate nor the Method have any thing to do in it. Could you separate the *Trust* from the *Emolument*, I am very free to declare, that I would have no such Snare laid in the way of any Man, (for the Concern is not to keep Dissenters poor, but out of Power, *i. e.* not to injure them, but to secure ourselves.) But since

this is impoſſible, we muſt be contented to take things as we find them, and ſuffer the *Conveniency* and the *Inconveniency* to go together.

But I am now wandering from the Point in hand. The Queſtion is, What good will this Method (ſuppoſing it to be every where made uſe of) in the end and concluſion do to Religion? And the Objection is, That tho' it carries with it no *Oppreſſion* upon *Conſcience*, yet it offers ſuch a *Bribe* to Conſcience, as, generally ſpeaking, will prevent thoſe who are within the reach of it, from attempting a Reformation, if the Magiſtrate happens to be of another Opinion. I own the Charge, and am ſenſible that this Circumſtance in a greater degree or in a leſs, will always help to obſtruct a Reformation. But I have no Notion that, if this be the *only* Impediment, it will *totally ſtop* the Way to a Reformation: Becauſe I have not obſerved (and I dare ſay no Man elſe has found) that the Influence of a *Court* and it's *Dependents*, could ever ſo far ſtupify the Senſes of a Nation, as to cauſe them not to feel any real Hardſhip, *Religious* or *Civil*. Every Magiſtrate who underſtands how to govern, will be careful (ſo far as is poſſible) that none be put into Offices of *Truſt*, but ſuch as will ſupport *his own* Meaſures of *Civil* Adminiſtration: And if theſe be ſuch as no honeſt Man can engage in; 'tis more than an even chance that he may find Knaves enough that will. But what is this to the Community? If a Poſt of ſome Thouſands a Year will ſtop the Mouth of an *ambitious Courtier*, the reſt of the World who feel the ill Effects of a bad Adminiſtration, will eaſily underſtand that things are not as they ought to be: Whence elſe have we heard of *general Revolts* occaſioned by unwarrantable

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Encroachments upon the Liberties of the Subject? The Reckoning ſtands juſt the ſame in the Affair of *Religion*. Magiſtrates may *preſcribe*, but the People will *judge* as they find Reaſon, where there is a free Liberty of judging. Whatever they diſlike they will certainly complain of; and when once the Complaint grows to be general, the Magiſtrate will as certainly find it for his Intereſt to apply a Remedy. In ſhort, ſince Experience ſhews us that the confining Offices of *Truſt* to Perſons well affected to the Government upon a *Civil* Account, is very conſiſtent with the removal of *Civil* Grievances; nothing hinders us from concluding that the confining ſuch Offices to Perſons well affected upon a *Religious* Account, is alſo very conſiſtent with the removal of *Religious* Grievances.

This Method then you ſee comes up exactly to the Standard above laid down: *i. e.* It tends to ſupport Truth where it *is* encouraged, and will not prevent a Reformation where it is *not* encouraged; and by conſequence makes way for a *general Eſtabliſhment* of *True* Religion by *Human Laws*. Now pray conſider what would be the Conſequence if this Method being laid aſide, Offices of *Truſt* were beſtowed upon all without diſtinction, whether they complied with the National Religion or complied with it not: And I am very much deceived or you will find it to be this, That, under ſuch a ſtate of the Caſe you could have no Eſtabliſhment at all. The Reaſon is becauſe Perſons in Authority thro' the Concern which they have in *executing*, and (in ſome Conſtitutions) even in *making* Laws, are always ſuch a *Check* upon the Magiſtrate, that unleſs he ſecures theſe to his Intereſt, it will be impoſſible for him to purſue any one Point of

Government with Steddineſs and Reſolution. Every one ſees and feels this, in Matters of a *Civil* Nature. And therefore (as I ſaid juſt now) 'tis a Maxim in Policy which no Man finds Fault with, to provide ſo far as may be, that the Views both of the Magiſtrate and of thoſe who act as Miniſters under him, be directed exactly the ſame Way. For otherwiſe there will be a perpetual claſhing and interfering where there ought to be the moſt perfect Harmony: and whatever Meaſures the one purſues, the others will be always ready to obſtruct. Suppoſe then *ſome one Way* of Worſhip eſtabliſhed by the Magiſtrate; *i. e.* ſuppoſe (which is the leaſt that can be ſuppoſed) a Proviſion made by the Magiſtrate that the Advantage of *publick Inſtruction* ſhall lie in favour of *that one Way*, which thoſe who act as Miniſters under him either *generally*, or (which upon this Foot may ſometimes happen) *univerſally* judge to be wrong. The Conſequence is plain, that either he will be obliged to conſent to repeal thoſe proviſional Laws, and to make new ones in favour of ſome other Religion; or he muſt be contented to be ſerved by thoſe who will not like him, *i. e.* by thoſe whom he cannot truſt. And let any one judge whether in ſuch a State of the Caſe as this, it would not be far more adviſeable for the Magiſtrate to throw up all Care of Religion, and to declare at once that he would make no Proviſion for one Way more than for another, than to be continually expoſed to thoſe Hazards and Vexations, which the Struglings of different and contrary Factions muſt neceſſarily introduce. If you ſhould call the Caſe home to ourſelves, and ſay, that the having a *Vote* to chuſe Perſons to ſerve in *Parliament*, is having an *Intereſt* in the

the *Legiſlature*; and that therefore it will follow in Virtue of this Reaſoning, that even this Liberty ought to be taken from Diſſenters: My Anſwer is, That I care not how far this Reaſoning goes, provided it goes but Right. They who ſee this Conſequence may examine it at Leiſure: It ſeems to me to be much eaſier to ſee the Conſequence, than to prove it to be an Unreaſonable one. Wherefore,

2. Thus much being ſaid to ſhew that this Method, if every where made Uſe of, would in the End and Concluſion turn to the Advantage of true Religion; I come now to conſider what particular Exceptions lie againſt the Uſe of it. And here I ſhould have found my ſelf under a great Scarcity of Matter, had I not been beholden to the Labours of a late celebrated Writer, who roundly tells us that all the Members of Civil Society have (*x*) *a* NATURAL RIGHT, *to the* CAPACITY *of ſerving their Country in* OFFICES *of* TRUST, *till they have forfeited it by Profeſſions or Practices directly and abſolutely inconſiſtent with their Countries Safety.* Before we can judge of the *Truth* of this Aſſertion, it will be very requiſite to make *Senſe* of it, which it ſcarce is as it now ſtands. For beſides that it is abſurd to talk of a *Natural* Right to that which reſults merely from *Civil Inſtitution*, and hath no Exiſtence *out of* a *Commonwealth*: It is evident that a *Capacity* to ſerve one's Country in an Office of *Truſt*, implies divers Qualifications which are not the Object of *Right* either *Natural* or *Civil*. Thus, for inſtance, a *Capacity* to ſerve one's Country in the Office of a *Judge*, implies

(*x*) Anſw. to the Committee, *p.* 184

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the Qualifications of *Wiſdom*, *Learning*, and *Integrity*: But does any one underſtand ſo little Language as to ſay that a Man has a *Right* to be either *Wiſe*, or *Learned*, or *Upright*? Again; What have *directly* and *abſolutely* to do here? Is it not enough to diſqualify a Man for an Office of *Truſt*, that he is guilty of Profeſſions or Practices *inconſiſtent* with his Countries Safety, whether they be to *directly* or *indirectly*, *abſolutely* or *not abſolutely*? —— But I will not ſtay to contend about Words, provided I can but underſtand the Thing. And therefore, preſuppoſing, the *Natural* and *Moral* Endowments of Men, and all other Matters neceſſary to be preſuppoſed; we will conſider the Aſſertion only as it relates to *mere Differences* about *Religion*. You muſt have obſerved already that it is not ſaid, that all the Members of Civil Society have a Right to the *actual holding* or *enjoying* Offices of *Truſt*. This had been too groſs an Abſurdity. But *ſome* Right or other was reſolved upon; and therefore it is maintain'd that they have a Right to the *Capacity*, of enjoying them, or to the *Capacity* of *being choſen* to hold ſuch Offices. We muſt ſee then more diſtinctly what this *Capacity* means, and how this *Right* can be ſupported. And in order to this it will be proper to ſhew, how the Caſe ſtands under *abſolute Monarchies*, where the ſupreme *Legiſlative* and the ſupreme *Executive* Power ſubſiſts in one and the ſame Perſon; for this will lead us clearly to diſcover how it ſtands alſo in *Mixt* Governments, where thoſe two Branches of the ſupreme Authority are lodged in different Hands.

Suppoſe then in the firſt Place an *Abſolute Monarchy*. The Aſſertion is, that under ſuch a Form of Government, every Member of the Society

Society hath a Right to a *Capacity* of ſerving the Magiſtrate in Offices of *Truſt*, till they have forfeited it by Profeſſions or Practices inconſiſtent with their Countries Safety, *i. e.* (for this is what they mean) inconſiſtent with their Countries Safety, *conſidered merely as a Civil Society*. By a Right to a *Capacity*, here I preſume we are not to underſtand a Right to hold ſuch Offices IF the Magiſtrate thinks fit to beſtow them: For this is juſt ſuch a Right as I have to a *hundred Pounds* in your Pocket. I have a Right to make Uſe of it, if you are diſpoſed to give it me. The meaning therefore is, That every Subject hath a Right *to be conſider'd* by the Magiſtrate *as a fit Perſon* to be employed in Offices of *Truſt*, if there be no *other* Objection againſt him *beſides* his *Opinions* in Religion: Or in other Words, that the Magiſtrate hath no Right to *refuſe* admitting any Man to hold an Office of Truſt, *purely* becauſe he *diſſents* or *ſeparates* from the National Way of Worſhip. This is the Notion, which we are told, is *as old as Truth and Reaſon themſelves*; a Thing which a Man may ſay with great eaſe to himſelf as often as he has a mind to it. But to prove it, is hard, and, as I conceive, impoſſible. It is uſually ſaid on this Occaſion, that becauſe ſuch Offices are the *Favours* of the Magiſtrate; therefore he may diſpoſe of them upon what Conditions or Conſiderations he pleaſes: Which I do not think to be exactly right. They are *Favours*, 'tis true: But then he is to conſider theſe *Favours* as a *Truſt* put into his Hands by the Society for the *common Good*: And conſequently in the diſpoſal of them he ought always to have a regard to ſome *Publick End*, in which his Office is properly concerned. If the Magiſtrate ſhould refuſe to make

a Man *Lord Treaſurer* only becauſe he has a *wide Mouth* or a *Roman Noſe*; this would be an Act of Injuſtice both to *him* and to the *Publick*. For what hath the Magiſtrate to do with Men's *Mouths* or with their *Noſes?* Or of what Advantage is it to the *Publick*, whether a Perſon in Authority hath *good* Features or whether he hath *bad* ones? But there is *Juſtice* in debarring a Man ſuch an Office, becauſe he is *diſaffected*, or becauſe he is a *Knave*. And why? Why becauſe there is all the Reaſon in the World to believe, that he would be falſe to his Truſt, and employ that *Power* which he acquires in Virtue of that Office, not *for*, but *againſt*, the Publick Intereſt. Now 'tis but ſuppoſing (what our Adverſaries indeed conſtantly deny, but which I hope I have ſufficiently proved) that it belongs to the Magiſtrates Office to take care of Religion; and the Work is done at once. For if it be right in the Magiſtrate to exclude a Perſon obnoxious upon a *Civil* Account, becauſe the *Civil Good* is his Care; it muſt be as right in him to exclude a Perſon obnoxious upon a *Religious* Account, becauſe *Religion* is his Care. The Reaſon is exactly the ſame in both Caſes: And in all Caſes it will be found true, that whatever it be, which the Magiſtrate by his Office is bound to preſerve, he ought to put it in no Man's Power to hurt or to deſtroy.

From hence then it is evident that there is no Period of Time aſſignable in any well conſtituted Commonwealth, in which it can be ſaid, that *every* Subject has ſuch a *Right* as our Adverſaries contend for. But if it were poſſible to aſſign ſuch a Period; this would not help them, unleſs they could prove this Right to be *unalienable*. Now this is what I would deſire

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to know of theſe Reaſoners. Are not *all* Rights Natural or not Natural, *limitable* by the ſupreme Power for Reaſons which concern the good of the Society? Tho' the Thing is plain of itſelf, as flowing from the very Notion of a Commonwealth, yet I will give an Inſtance or two to explain it. It was an ancient Privilege of all *Free-holders* in *England* who were qualified to give a *Vote*, to be *capable* of being choſen as Repreſentatives in *Parliament*. Nevertheleſs this Privilege has by Authority been lately confined to thoſe who have ſo many hundred Pounds a Year. Again; It is a Natural Law that all the Products of the Creation, in which no Man's Labour or Expence has given him a ſpecial Property, are common. Yet our *Game-Laws* have reſtrained this Right, and limited the Uſe of certain *Beaſts* and *Fowl*, to Perſons of ſuch an Eſtate. Now if all this be juſtifiable, (which no Man queſtions) how comes it to paſs that Limitations of Men's Right, made for the ſake or on the account of *Religion*, ſhould be unjuſtifiable? Is it of leſs Conſequence, think you, Who ſerves God in the way he has preſcribed, than it is, Who is elected to ſerve the Intereſts of a *Country* or of a *Corporation*? Is it a leſs Evil in itſelf to diſhonour him and his Laws, than it is to kill a *Pheaſant* or a *Hare*? Is there Senſe that ſome ſhould take away the Rights of others, for their *Gain* or for their *Diverſion*; and none that they ſhould do the ſame Thing for a much better End, the ſecuring *Virtue* and *Piety*? I know the utmoſt of your Anſwer. The Magiſtrate, ſay you, has nothing to do with Religion. And I ſay, ſhew it me. If you can, your Notion, I own, will want no farther ſupport: If you cannot, it is impoſſible it ſhould be ſupported.

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We have hitherto ſuppoſed the Form of Government to be *abſolutely Monarchical.* Let us now put the Caſe of a *mix't* Government, and ſuppoſe that the ſupreme *Legiſlative*, and ſupreme *Executive* Power, are put into different Hands. Here the Diſtinction between the *actual holding* Offices of *Truſt*, and the *Capacity* to hold them will be ſtill more clear, if it be ſuppoſed (which is really the Caſe among ourſelves) that the ſupreme *Executive* Power in whoſe Hands the Right of diſpoſing ſuch Offices is lodged; is tyed down by an expreſs and poſitive Act of the ſupreme *Legiſlative* Power, *not* to beſtow them *but* upon Perſons ſo or ſo qualified. For then none will be under a *Capacity* of holding ſuch Offices, but they who come within the limits preſcribed by the Legiſlative Power. But tho' this Caſe ſets the meaning of the Aſſertion in a clearer Light, it does not in the leaſt affect the Iſſue of the Diſpute. For the Right of the ſupreme Legiſlative Power (where it is not limited by any *ſpecial* Fundamental Laws) is the ſame under all Forms of Government: And conſequently if it has a Right to deny Offices of *Truſt* to Diſſenters from the National Religion under an *abſolute* Monarchy; it muſt have a Right to bind the ſupreme Executive Power to do the ſame under a *limited* Monarchy. This brings the Point quite home to ourſelves: And you may now obſerve, that amidſt all the ſtir that has been made of late about the *Natural Right* of *every Subject* to a *Capacity* to hold Offices of *Truſt*, the Notion has nothing elſe to ſtand upon but this (as I beg leave to call it) moſt falſe Preſumption, that it is no Part of the Magiſtrates Office to take care of Religion. And in one Word, if this Principle can be ſhewn

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not to be falſe, *i. e.* if it can be proved that the Office of the Magiſtrate in its *original Deſign* and *Inſtitution* relates to mere *Civil* Good, excluſive of the Ends of *Religion*; I will give up all the reſt without any farther Controverſy. But whilſt the Foundation remains unſhaken, the Superſtructure, I think, cannot fail: And therefore here I ſhall leave the Matter to reſt, till ſome new and better Reaſons be offered on the other ſide. In the mean while, if any one has a mind to ſee more concerning the *Lawfulneſs* and *Neceſſity* of this Method, conſider'd with a particular View to our own Conſtitution, I muſt recommend him to the learned *Dean* of *Chicheſters* Vindication of the *Corporation* and *Teſt* Acts, where the Caſe is reſolved with ſo much true Judgment, that it would be an inexcuſable Vanity in me to pretend to add any thing to it by way of Improvement.

Having now conſider'd the Queſtion as it relates to *Negative Diſcouragements*; I proceed to conſider it,

Secondly, With regard to *Penal Laws*: And my Opinion is that all Laws of this ſort which inflict either *Death*, or *Torture*, or *Baniſhment*, or *Impriſonment*, ought, in this Caſe to be laid aſide. Becauſe (ſetting aſide other Reaſons which are peculiar to ſome, there is this Reaſon common to them all, *viz.* that) the Severity of the Laws being ſuch, as conſidering the Weakneſs of Fleſh and Blood, very few will be able to reſiſt; The Uſe of them muſt contradict the firſt Rule, That NO VIOLENCE *ought to be offered to* CONSCIENCE; and they are not Methods of *Diſcrimination*, but of *Diſtruction*. But then as to *Pecuniary Mulcts* I do not think that they ought *wholly* and *abſolutely* to be diſcarded: Becauſe they

they are capable of being ſo temper'd as to the *Degree* and *Meaſure* of them, that whilſt they offer *no Violence* to *Conſcience*, they ſhall yet very much help to *reſtrain Licentiouſneſs*; which (as has been ſhewn) is the true *Medium* that the Magiſtrate ought to aim at. Under this Head then I lay down the following Poſition, *viz.* That SUCH PECUNIARY MULCTS *as will be both the* TRYAL *and the* INDULGENCE *of the* SINCERITY *of Men*, i. e. *ſuch as will prevail upon no ſerious and ſober Perſon, to* JOYN *in the* NATIONAL *Way of Worſhip* AGAINST *his* CONSCIENCE; *and at the ſame time will, in a greater Degree, or in a leſs, be ſufficient to* HINDER *thoſe from* SEPARATING, *whom* NO REAL SCRUPLE *of Conſcience* OBLIGES *ſo to do*; *may* LAWFULLY *be impoſed by the* CIVIL MAGISTRATE. How *Pecuniary Mulcts*, may be thus moderated, and of what Service they would be to Religion, ſhall in the firſt Place be explained: And then (as in the preceeding Caſe) I ſhall endeavour to juſtify the Uſe of them, from ſuch particular Exceptions as may ſeem to lie againſt it.

1. Then; That ſuch a Temper with reſpect to *Pecuniary Mulcts*, as I am now ſpeaking of, may be found, muſt be viſible to any Man of ordinary Apprehenſion. For tho' it be impoſſible to aſſign that Method, which, ſaving harmleſs, *all good* Men; ſhall be ſufficient to controul *all bad* ones: Yet it is very eaſy to diſcern that there may be a Method which ſhall effectually curb the Paſſions of *Many*, whilſt at the ſame Time it leaves a juſt Liberty to *all*. There was a Law once in Force among ourſelves by which it was provided, that every one who abſented himſelf from his Pariſh Church ſhould pay *Twelve-pence* a Sunday. This Law as it ſtood might be liable to many Exceptions, and this

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was certainly a very great one, that it had no regard to the Diverſity of Men's Circumſtances, which is many times ſo great, that one ſhall be oppreſſed by paying a Sum, which another will hardly feel. What is *Twelve-pence* a Sunday to a Gentleman of many Thouſands a Year? And what is it *not* to the poor Wretch who cannot earn a Peny more than is neceſſary to buy Bread for Himſelf and Family? But let us ſuppoſe a Law made to this or ſome ſuch Effect, That every Perſon who does not think fit to conform to the National Religion, ſhould be obliged to enter his Name in ſome Publick *Regiſter*; and that ſo many *Pounds* as he is rated to the *King*, ſo many *Six-pences* (or any other Sum you like better) he ſhould pay yearly as a *Tribute* for his Liberty. Let this I ſay be ſuppoſed, or any other Law of the ſame ſort, and I will then ask what kind of *Conſcience* that muſt be which will permit a Man to act againſt his own Senſe and Conviction, rather than to pay the *Fortieth* Part of what he is worth? Plainly ſo bad a one as not to be worth the owning, and therefore not worth the Magiſtrates regarding; who will have little to do if he muſt never make a Law, till he can be ſure that it will miniſter no Occaſion of Wickedneſs to *Covetous* and *Worldly-minded* Men. But if a Man of common *Honeſty* would chuſe to give up ſo ſmall a Portion of his Subſtance, rather than offend his Conſcience; a Man of common *Senſe* and *Diſcretion* would not wantonly throw it away, which yet would be the Caſe of thoſe who ſhould chuſe to part with it, when there is a poſſibility of keeping that and a good Conſcience together.

This Method might be (as indeed it ought to be) made to extend to all the Members of the

Society in general; to the *low* as well as to the *high*; to the *poor* as well as to the *rich*. As *Gentlemen* ſhould be taxed according to their *Eſtates*; ſo *Tradeſmen* (as is uſual in other Caſes) ſhould be taxed according to their *Stocks*, and *Labourers* and *Servants* according to their *Wages*: Only with reſpect to the two laſt ſort, it might be reaſonable perhaps ſomewhat to lower the Proportion. To ſay the Truth there may be other Rules of adjuſting the Proportion thought of, which may anſwer the Purpoſe much better than that which I have mentioned. The Burden ſhould always be heavy enough to be *felt*; but never *ſo* heavy as to *cruſh* or *overwhelm*. But I do not here aim at the exactneſs of a *Lawgiver* who is going to put the Method in Execution: I am only endeavouring to give the Reader a general Idea of the *Practicableneſs* of it: And this I am perſuaded that however the Licentious, who are impatient of contradiction, may diſlike it, no ſerious and good Man will find any juſt Reaſon to complain. A Man has a mind, we will ſay, to leave his *Pariſh Church* and go to a *Conventicle*. The Law allows it him, paying only ſuch a *Compoſition* for his Liberty. Will not this (ſuppoſing him to make a Conſcience of what he does) put him upon conſidering whether the Reaſons which lead him to ſeparate, be of ſufficient Weight to ballance the Inconveniency which attends upon a Separation? 'Tis plain it will. Well; Let him conſider, and the more the better. For where Truth is concerned, the more a Man conſiders (ſuppoſing his Senſe to be equal to his Honeſty) the better he will like it. Now if this happens to be the Caſe, *i. e.* if upon mature Deliberation the Man ſees reaſon to be reconciled to the eſtabliſhed Religion;

Religion; there is *this good* obtained, that a wavering Mind is confirmed in a good Way. But if it happens otherwiſe, there will be *no Harm* done on the other ſide; it being ſuppoſed that the *Inconveniency* which attends upon a *Separation*, is not ſo great as to lead any Man of common Honeſty to conform againſt his Will. The Conſequence then of ſuch a Method would be plainly this: That all thoſe looſe and floating Chriſtians, who underſtand and conſider little, but mean well; and without any formed or ſettled Principle of Conſcience, are (like ſo many *Motes* and *Straws*) ſwept in by the mere *Eddy* of a Faction: That theſe I ſay, would be kept faſt within the Boſom of the Church, and the Separation confined, in a good Degree, (where it *ought* to be confined, and where the Law intends *it ſhould* be confined,) to *Conſciences truly Scrupulous*; i. e. to thoſe who reſort to *Conventicles*, not merely becauſe it is their *Pleaſure*, but becauſe they have *Reaſons* weighty *to themſelves* for ſo doing. The Number of this latter Sort, ſome, I know, are wont to Magnify. But, ſo far as ever I could obſerve, they are by far the leaſt among Diſſenters of all Sorts and Denominations. "I have no Objection (ſay they) "againſt the *Church* of *England*. 'Tis a "ſafe and good Way for ought I know. But I "like the *Meetings* better; and why may not I "make Uſe of that Liberty which the Law al-"lows me?" Seldom ſhall you meet with a better excuſe for Separation than this, among the common Sort. And pray tell me ſeriouſly; Can you believe that if a Man in good Circumſtances were obliged to pay as much for his Scruples, as it would coſt him to keep a *Horſe*, or to defray the Charges of an ordinary *Poors-*

and a *Labourer* or a *Servant* no more than what he can afford to ſpend Yearly at *Foot-ball Matches*, *Wakes*, and ſuch like idle Diverſions: Can you believe, I ſay, were this the Caſe that there would be *ſo many*, who would think it worth the while to diſpute, whether in receiving the Holy *Sacrament*, a Man ought to *kneel* or to *ſtand*; Whether the Miniſter when he officiates ſhould wear a *white* Garment or a *black* one; Or whether it is beſt to *read* his *Prayers* and *Sermon*, or to ſay them *by Heart*? Aſſure your ſelf that theſe and ſuch like Differences would (if not wholly ceaſe) at leaſt give but little Diſturbance. For whatever there be in theſe Things, at which weak Men may ſometimes ſtumble, it muſt be plain to any Man of common Obſervation, that when any conſiderable *Party* is formed upon ſuch Diſtinctions, it muſt owe it's ſupport in a great Meaſure to the *Giddineſs* of the Multitude; who having no *Ballaſt* within, nor any *Check* from without, are eaſily led this Way or that Way, *by the ſleight of Men, and cunning Craftineſs whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

You will object perhaps that I am all this while talking againſt Experience: For that Diſſenters do *now* pay as much, perhaps, as, according to my Propoſal, it is reaſonable and fitting for them to pay, *i. e.* as much as can be ſpared without *Oppreſſion.* All Publick Societies muſt be ſupported at publick Charges: And is it nothing to provide *Houſes* for the Publick Worſhip of God, and a *Maintenance* for their Congregational *Teachers*? I Anſwer; that how great ſoever theſe Expences may be ſuppoſed to be, thus much is obvious and undeniable, that they lie heavieſt where the weight of them is leaſt felt, *i. e.* upon

upon the wealthieſt of the Party who have more *Money*, (tho' perhaps not always more *Conſcience*) than their Followers. If it be ſuppoſed that theſe make up a *tenth* Part of the whole Body; it will be no wide Calculation if we ſay that of the *nine* Parts remaining, there is ordinarily *one* Half that pays *nothing*, and *another next to* nothing. What may a Congregation conſiſting of *two Hundred* Souls, be ſuppoſed to raiſe yearly for the Maintenance of it's Paſtor? Why if we take one with another, we ſhall be bountiful, I ſuppoſe, if we allow a *Hundred* Pounds. Admit then that out of theſe *two Hundred*, there are *Twenty* who pay at the rate of *four* Pounds a Year, and then ſee how much will remain to be divided among the reſt. But not to pretend to any exact Computation, (which it may be impoſſible to come at) I would only put this Queſtion to any reaſonable Man; *viz.* Whether amidſt all the buſtle that is made about *greater Purity* of Worſhip among the Diſſenters, there are not Multitudes of them who if they would conſider the Matter with any tolerable Care, would find the Difference to be ſo inconſiderable that they would make it their Choice rather to Conform, than to put themſelves to any *ſenſible* Inconveniency for the ſake of their Liberty. Whatever Reaſons there are (and many there are) to perſuade a Man to believe this; they are ſo many Arguments to ſhew the Uſefulneſs of this Method, which will be either more or leſs effectual in Proportion, as the Number of ſuch Men is either leſſer or greater. Nor let it be asked what Advantage will the Church receive by the Addition of ſuch *indifferent* Members to her Communion: For they are ſuppoſed to be *indifferent*, not with

reſpect to *Religion* or *Chriſtianity* in general, but with reſpect to the *Diverſity* which there is between the two Ways of Worſhip; which *Indifferency* will not in the leaſt hurt them as *Chriſtians*, tho' it alters their Meaſures as to *Conformity* or *Non-conformity*. If a Man upon Reaſons which he hath never well conſidered, but which he *ſuppoſes* or *believes* to have Weight, goes to a *Meeting*: He will be the *better* Chriſtian if he comes to *Church*, becauſe *upon* Conſideration he finds that they have *none*. And if another who, believing one Way to be as good as another, (which is the Caſe of many,) ſeparates only to pleaſe his *Fancy*, to indulge his *Curioſity*, becauſe he has been *bred up* that Way, or thro' any other little Conſiderations which may be ſufficient to caſt the Ballance when the Mind is equally poiſed on both ſides; it will not be ſaid I hope that his Conformity makes him ever the *worſe*. Nor, finally, when you have ſuppoſed the worſt that can be ſuppoſed; can it be pretended that it is of *no* Conſequence, to put an end to *outward Differences* and *Diſtinctions*; which by occaſioning a breach of Charity, cauſes Men whilſt they are contending about Shadows, to looſe the Subſtance of Religion and Godlineſs.

Well then; Let it be ſo, you'll ſay, that this Method tends to the Advancement of true Religion, where true Religion happens to be encouraged. Still 'tis allowed that the ſame Method ought to be purſued where Error is encouraged; and pray ſee what will be the Conſequence then. Be not diſheartened; The Conſequence will not hurt you. That which this Method directly propoſes is this; That, ſo far as is poſſible, none ſhould ſeparate from the Religion of their Country, but thoſe who upon

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ſober and ſerious Reflection with themſelves, think it their *Duty* ſo to do: Which Rule if it were every where obſerved as well under bad Eſtabliſhments, as under good ones, the World would be conſiderably the better for it. To conſider ſeriouſly, and to judge warily, are Things which can never hurt the Truth; but the Want of them will: And tho' 'tis certain that ſome preſent Inconveniencies may ariſe from the Uſe of this Method, in thoſe Countries where Error is eſtabliſhed, (which as I ſaid before, is the Caſe of every Method which hath any Virtue or Efficacy) yet that theſe are ſuch as will *ſtop the Way* to a *Reformation*, or any thing like it, is what I utterly deny. Let us conſider this Matter a little carefully. The Competition at preſent lies only between *Moderate, Pecuniary Mulcts*, and an *abſolute Indulgence*. To find out the true Difference, therefore due *Inſtruction* ought alike to be ſuppoſed on both ſides. Now this I ſay; If the whole World were to agree in the Uſe of ſuch *Pecuniary Mulcts*, all who are capable to receive the Benefit of Inſtruction, and are not loſt to all Senſe of Religion, would (for ought that there is in this Method to hinder) as to all material Points at leaſt, worſhip God in that *one* Way wherein he ought to be worſhipped. For why? The Evidence of Truth is by Inſtruction ſuppoſed to be made plain to the Underſtanding; and here is nothing to prevent the Judgment and Conſcience from going together. Where Truth is encouraged, there the Advantages of this World will lie on the ſide of Conſcience; and even where 'tis diſcouraged, there is no Danger to be apprehended; becauſe the Diſcouragement is ſuppoſed not to be ſo great as to lay

any *Force* upon Conſcience. All that can be ſaid is; That *weak* Men who *cannot* judge; *careleſs* Men who *will not* judge; And *wicked* Men who either will not *judge*, or will not *act* according to what they judge; will generally fall in with the National Religion whatever it be. But this can be no Objection: For as to *careleſs* and *wicked* Men, (whilſt they are ſuch) they have no Pretence to be reckoned in the Account. As they profeſs the National Religion merely becauſe *it is* the National Religion: So if there were *no* National Religion, they would profeſs none. Either way they are Men (properly ſpeaking) of *no* Religion: And when Men have *no* Religion, their Pretence cannot add to, nor their Abſence diminiſh from, the Number of Religious Men. And as to the *weak* and *injudicious*, it is my Opinion that in general they will be *as ſafe* at leaſt under the Direction of the Magiſtrate, as they would be under the Influence of their own Humours and Fancies, and the Practices of thoſe artful deſigning Men, who for vile and mercenary Ends may be diſpoſed to beguile and ſeduce them. But with reſpect to this ſort of Men, there is one Thing more to be ſaid, which is, That ſince the *weak* are always governed by the *ſtrong*, and Men of *little* Senſe the *Property* (as it were) of thoſe who have *much*; To ſecure the former, there is no need of any thing more than to take care of the latter, who, when once they come to feel the Neceſſity of a Reformation, will draw the reſt after them without much Difficulty.

I ſhould hope that by this Time enough has been ſaid to convince any reaſonable Man

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of the uſefulneſs of this Method. What remains is,

2. To conſider what particular Exceptions lie againſt it. There are but Two that I can think to be of weight ſufficient to deſerve the Readers Attention: Theſe therefore, and theſe only, I ſhall diſtinctly ſpeak to.

EXCEPTION. I.

It may be ſaid then that *this Method propoſes that* PECUNIARY MULCTS *be impoſed upon thoſe who* SEPARATE *from the* NATIONAL *Religion upon ſome* REAL SCRUPLE *of* CONSCIENCE. *But ſuch Men are guilty of* NO FAULT; *and where there is* NO FAULT, *even the loweſt Degree of* PUNISHMENT *is unjuſt.*

This Reaſon was of great Weight with Mr. *Locke*, and deſerves to be conſidered. I Anſwer,

1. By admitting what the Objection ſuppoſes, *viz.* That thoſe who ſeparate from the true National Religion honeſtly and with a good Conſcience, are guilty of *no Fault.* Here is none againſt *God*, becauſe they are ſuppoſed to act according to their Conſciences, after due Care to inform themſelves: Here is none againſt the *Magiſtrate*, who hath no Authority to bind Men *againſt* their Conſciences. It is not eſſential to the Notion of an *Eſtabliſhment*, that the Magiſtrate even *makes* a Law, commanding his Subjects to Worſhip God in one particular Way. It is enough that he ſhews what way *he approves*, and makes a *publick Proviſion*

Proviſion for it's Defence and Security above all others. But if there *were* ſuch a Law made, the meaning of it could be only to enjoin all to comply with it *who can*; which (as I ſaid before) implies an *Exception* to thoſe who *cannot*. Now where there is a *Liberty* granted, there can certainly be *no Fault* in making uſe of that Liberty. Wherefore,

2. The Point comes to this, *viz.* Whether in order to juſtify the Magiſtrate in levying *Pecuniary Mulcts*, it be always neceſſary to ſuppoſe a *Fault*; and to me it is very evident that it is not. The Caſe is undeniably plain, 1. With reſpect to all ſuch Laws as are termed *purely Penal*; i. e. with reſpect to thoſe Laws where the Intention of the Legiſlator is equally anſwered, whether you ſubmit to the Law, or pay the Penalty. If the Magiſtrate ſhould make a Law that every Man of ſuch an Eſtate that would not ſerve in the *War*, ſhould pay *ten Pounds*: Would you ſay that he who ſhould chuſe to pay the *ten Pounds* would be guilty of a *Fault*? Certainly not. And the Reaſon is plain, *viz.* Becauſe by the very Nature of the Law, it appears that the Magiſtrate leaves him at Liberty to do either the *one* or the *other*; and conſequently the *Will* of the Magiſtrate will either way be equally obeyed. This comes up exactly to the Caſe in hand. The Magiſtrate, orders, we will ſay, that every one of ſuch Circumſtances who will not go to *Church*, ſhall pay *twenty Shillings*. A Man pays the *twenty Shillings* and goes to a *Meeting*. Where is the *Fault*? Why no where; becauſe here is the ſame Liberty given as before. But what Juſtice, you will ask, is there in this latter Caſe? Why juſt as much as there is in the former. The

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Reaſons of the Law are not *the ſame* in both Caſes, but they are *ſufficient* in both. In the one Caſe, the Magiſtrate demands Money to purchaſe ſo much *Power* to the Government, which every Subject in proportion to the Intereſt he has in it, is bound to ſupport. In the other, Money is demanded, to ſet a guard about a Liberty, which tho' every Man has a Right to make uſe of, yet no Man has or can have a Right to *abuſe*. The Caſe is alſo clear, 2. With reſpect to ALL Laws made for the *Publick Civil Good*, which happen to interfere with the Conſciences of particular Perſons. Inſtead of a *Diſcretionary* Law, let us ſuppoſe the Magiſtrate to iſſue out a *peremptory Edict*, commanding ſuch and ſo many of his Subjects, to go to *War* upon pain of *Baniſhment* or *Confiſcation* of *Goods*. Some of them believing in their Conſciences the *War* to be unjuſt, refuſe to go. I ask now, are theſe Perſons guilty of a *Fault* or are they not? It is not at all material to enquire here, whether the *War* be *really* juſt or unjuſt; nor yet whether this be a Caſe in which Private Perſons have a Right to judge. We will ſuppoſe, if you pleaſe, both that they have *no* right to judge, and that they judge *wrong*: Still they are ſuppoſed to act according to the beſt of their Knowledge: They *think* they ought to judge, and according to the trueſt Judgment they can make, they are perſuaded that by obeying the Magiſtrate, they ſhould offend God. What ſay you? Guilty or not Guilty? Not Guilty ſay I. For wherever there is a *Fault*, there muſt be ſome *Law* tranſgreſſed: And what is a *Law*? Not ſurely a mere *Command*. For you may *command* me to run my Head againſt a Wall: But this is no *Law*; be-

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cauſe you have no *Authority* to command it. A *Law* then is a Command *with Authority*: And this is what Biſhop *Sanderſon* means when he defines it, *Regula agendi, Subdito, a Superiore,* POTESTATEM HABENTE, *impoſita.* The *Law* then being founded in *Authority*, where the *Authority* ends, the *Law* muſt end too. And the Authority of *Man* muſt ever have an *end* when it comes to ſtand in competition with the Authority of *God.* It remains then that here is an *Edict*, which conſidered merely as an *Edict* or *Command*, reaches indeed to *all*: But which as a *Law* or *Authoritative* command, reaches to thoſe only who can *in Conſcience* comply with it. Hath now the Magiſtrate a Right to execute the *Penalty* upon thoſe who refuſe to comply or hath he not? Doubtleſs you will ſay he *has*; becauſe otherwiſe there will be an end of all Government. But whoever ſays this, acknowledgeth thereby that there may be a Right to inflict *Penalties* upon thoſe who are guilty of no *Fault*: Or in other Words, that in order to juſtify the Magiſtrate in inflicting *Penalties*, a *Fault* is not always neceſſary to be ſuppoſed. Wherefore,

3. In order to get quite clear of the Objection, we have only to conſider, whether the Reaſon which juſtifies the Magiſtrate in this Caſe, will not juſtify him alſo in the Caſe before us; of which I think there is little room to doubt or deliberate. For the Reaſon which juſtifies the Magiſtrate in enforcing Laws made for the *Publick Civil Good* by *Penal Sanctions*, is (as I before ſaid) a *Preſumption* that every Member of the Society has in theſe Caſes *obliged* himſelf either to obey the Law, or to ſubmit to the *Penalty*: And there is certainly as much

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a Right of *Preſumption* in the one Caſe, as there is in the other. The Magiſtrate muſt always be underſtood to have a Right to conſider Men as *conſenting* to every Thing, to which wiſe and reaſonable Men *ought* to conſent, for the good of the whole: And what reaſonable Man can refuſe to conſent to put himſelf to a ſmall Inconveniency, if thereby he may in any good Degree be inſtrumental in promoting the Honour of God, and the everlaſting Intereſt of his Fellow-Creatures? That wiſe and reaſonable Men ſhould conſent to the Uſe of *oppreſſive* Methods to ſupport Religion, *cannot* be ſuppoſed for Reaſons that have afore been mentioned. But that they ſhould have conſented to the Uſe of ſuch a Method as can be no heavy Burden upon any that mean honeſtly, is what *may*, yea, what *muſt*, be ſuppoſed for Reaſons which I hope I need not mention, and which it would be even a ſhame in any Man to diſpute. A Variety of Inſtances are to be given, in which wiſe and good Men, think it right to oblige themſelves to pay certain yearly Sums for the promoting Religion and Piety. And tho' in many Caſes it would be a great Hardſhip, if, what a Man is diſpoſed charitably to give, ſhould be demanded of him by Law: Yet thus much is certain, that, ſince it is on all Hands admitted that *ſomething* of this ſort ought to be done; every Man muſt be ſuppoſed to conſent that the Magiſtrate ſhould do *ſo much* as he finds reaſonable and fitting to be done, in a Publick Way. If there were a Law that as the Rich in every Pariſh are bound to provide their Poor with Food and Raiment, ſo they ſhould be obliged to provide them with ſuitable *Inſtruction* alſo; I think it would be the moſt righteous Law in the

the World. That which juſtifies it is this, That tho' Men's *Charity* neither ought to be, nor indeed can be, determined by Law; yet that the Magiſtrate hath always ſuch a Right over the Purſes of his Subjects, as will enable him to aſſign a reaſonable Share or Proportion of their Subſtance, to ſerve any uſeful End of Society, of which Religion has been ſhewn to be one. Now pray tell me; What is paying a moderate Sum as a compoſition for Liberty to ſeparate from the true National Religion, when thro' the unavoidable Errors of Conſcience we are unable to comply with it, more than paying ſo much Money for the ſervice of Religion? It is doubtleſs in the main and upon the whole for the good of Religion, that every Man ſhould be ſuffered to worſhip God in that Way, in which he thinks he ought to be worſhipped. This Liberty therefore is allowed you. But that Men ſhould ſeparate from the true Way of Worſhip, when their Conſciences lay them under no Neceſſity of doing it, is *not* for the good of Religion: This therefore is a Liberty which neither is, nor ought to be allowed. What then do we expect? Why that You who unhappily are the *Occaſion* of obliging the Magiſtrate to grant a Liberty for the *good* of Religion; may Yourselves (ſo far as may be, and at a very moderate Expence) become the Inſtruments of preventing this Liberty from being abuſed to the *hurt* of Religion. Do you agree to it, or do you not? If you do, I have the Thing I want; But if you do not, you may *pretend* to Conſcience as much as you pleaſe: But, in plain Terms, 'tis a very ſhrewd Sign that you have *none*.

Thus

Thus at laſt we are (and very ſafely I hope) got thro' the firſt Difficulty, of which if thoſe, who propoſe it, had conſider'd more, there would have been no need to have ſaid ſo much. The only thing which puzzles the Queſtion is the equivocal Uſe of the Words *Fault* and *Puniſhment*; which in ſome Senſe are always relative the one to the other, and in ſome Senſe not. If by a *Fault* you underſtand ſomething which is ſtrictly *Criminal*, i. e. *morally Evil* with reſpect to ſome Law Human or Divine; 'tis plain from the Inſtances above, that *Puniſhment* doth not neceſſarily preſuppoſe a *Fault*. But if by a *Fault* you mean merely the Tranſgreſſion of a *Command* excluſive of the *Morality* and *Immorality* of it, then Puniſhment *will* imply a Fault. For Men are never ſaid to be *puniſhed* but for doing ſomething which they are forbidden to do, or for not doing ſomething which they are commanded to do. If a King levies Money upon his Subjects for the Publick Uſe; this is called a *Tax* or *Tribute*, but never a *Penalty*. The Reaſon is becauſe here is no previous *Law* for the tranſgreſſion of which ſuch Money is demanded. But if he makes a Law commanding them to mend the *High-ways*, to repair *Publick Buildings*, and the like, and fixes a Sum to be raiſed upon Defaulters; this is call'd a *Penalty*, and not a *Tax* and *Tribute*, for a contrary Reaſon. The Caſe of *Diſcretionary* Laws may perhaps ſtand as an Exception to this general Rule. For (as in the Inſtance before mentioned) tho' a Law enjoining that thoſe who will not ſerve in the War ſhall pay *ten Pounds*, does not properly imply a *Command* to ſerve in the War; yet I conceive that the Money levied upon thoſe who ſhould refuſe to ſerve, would

would (through the Affinity of the Thing) be termed a *Penalty*. Nevertheleſs, ſince this is of the ſame Nature with thoſe *Pecuniary Mulcts*, which might be laid upon Diſſenters as a Compoſition for their Liberty, they ought rather, I think, to be called both by the ſame Name. Strictly ſpeaking, they are neither of them *Penalties*; nor ſhould I therefore have mentioned theſe *Pecuniary Mulcts* under the Head of *Penal Laws*, but that I knew not where ſo conveniently to place them. But if any one will ſay that they *are* Penalties, I ſhall not contend, provided he does not make it the ground of an Argument; nor raiſe ſuch Concluſions upon the mere force of a Word, as (I have ſhewn I hope) are not to be juſtified. To proceed then to the next Exception.

EXCEPTION. II.

It may be objected farther; That *the granting to the* Magiſtrate *ſuch a Power as I now contend for, is putting a Power into his Hands which will be very apt to be abuſed, and may be attended with bad Conſequences. For the Power contended for, is not a Power to impoſe* Pecuniary Mulcts *of* ANY *ſort, but a Power to impoſe* MODERATE *pecuniary Mulcts* ONLY. *Now the* Magiſtrate (*to whoſe Diſcretion this muſt be left*) *may either miſtake in judging, what* Pecuniary Mulcts ARE moderate; *or thro' Avarice and Cruelty may be led, under the Pretext of impoſing* MODERATE Pecuniary Mulcts, *to levy* EXORBITANT FINES.

The

The general Anſwer to this Objection is, That it concludes with equal ſtrength againſt truſting the Magiſtrate with *any* diſcretionary Power at all. Yet it is plain that all Magiſtrates have, and in many Caſes *muſt* have, a diſcretionary Power; from which, ordinarily, we find no ill Effects, nor can find any but where the Magiſtrate pays no regard to the Rules of Reaſon, Juſtice and Equity. But more particularly,

1. As to the Difficulty of judging what *Pecuniary Mulcts* are *moderate*; 'Tis here as it is in moſt other Caſes, hard to fix upon the indiviſible Point where moderate Courſes end, and extravagant ones begin: Yet there can be no conſiderable Deviation on either ſide, which will not fall under the Notice of common Senſe. 'Tis hard to determine preciſely how much *Liquor* a Man may *drink* conſiſtently with the Rules of *Sobriety*. Yet it would be ridiculous to propoſe it as a matter of Difficulty, how to diſtinguiſh a *temperate* Man from a *ſot*. In the preſent Caſe, if a Diſſenter from the National Religion were fined only the *parings* of his *Nails*, every one would judge it to be no Fine at all. On the other Hand, if he had a Mulct ſet upon him to the value of his whole Eſtate, every one would as readily determine it to be immoderate. The Temper lies ſome where between both Extreems; which tho' no Man can define to a Mathematical Exactneſs, yet a Man of ordinary Diſcretion from a general Knowledge and Obſervation of Mankind, will be able to diſcover ſo far as is uſeful. But,

2. What if the Magiſtrate willfully, and againſt all Reaſon, takes Occaſion from hence to oppreſs and harraſs Diſſenters? I Anſwer,

1. That there is little Danger to be apprehended from this Quarter, in *mixt* or *popular* Governments, where the *Executive* Power is tied down by ſpecial Rules, and the People are governed by no Laws, but ſuch as are of their own making. It were as eaſy a matter for the *Parliament* in Great *Britain*, or for the *States* in *Holland*, to proportion the Sum that every Diſſenter ſhall pay for his Liberty, as it is to determine how much the Subject ſhall be aſſeſſed to the Publick Revenue. And although in difficult and diſtracted Times, when Party Quarrels run high, and Men have loſt their Temper, ſuch Inconveniencies might ariſe, as would make it reaſonable to wiſh that ſuch Meaſures, for a Seaſon, might be forborn: Yet upon the whole, and in the ordinary Courſe of Things, I ſee no Reaſon to apprehend that the whole Body of any Nation ſhould be diſpoſed to act with leſs *Wiſdom* and *Integrity* here, than in other Matters of State, which are and muſt be left to their Diſcretion. 2. Even in *abſolute*, *unlimited* Governments, you have the ſame Remedy here, that you have in all other Publick Grievances. If we go to the Patrons of the *Popular* Scheme, we ſhall find them admitting thro' Neceſſity a *Diſcretionary Power*, not leſs dangerous to *Civil Government*, than this is conceived to be to *Religion*. They tell us that tho' ſmall Grievances are to be born, yet when the ſupreme Power ſo far abuſes his Truſt as to endanger the Safety of the Commonwealth, the People have a Right to uſe Force to redreſs themſelves. Now if it ſhould be asked (as it uſually is on this Occaſion) who are to *judge* when Grievances are conſiſtent, or not conſiſtent, with the Safety of the Commonwealth; their Anſwer muſt be, *the People*.

But

But may not the People be jealous beyond Reaſon, and apprehend Dangers where there are really none? Or may not they grow Factious and Tumultuous, and reſolve right or wrong either to have no Government, or to change Hands? Clear your own Scheme from this Difficulty, and you will at the ſame time clear mine. When any conſiderable Number of Men are called upon by united Counſels, to determine Meaſures for the common Good; it is generally to be preſumed that they will act diſcreetly and wiſely. This is the fundamental Rule, upon which all *Popular* Schemes of Government ſubſiſt. Now if you have occaſion for this Maxim, pray take it and wellcome. But be ſo juſt as to allow me to make uſe of it in my Turn: For 'tis certain that it will ſerve us both alike, or it will ſerve neither of us.

And now I have likewiſe done with Exceptions: For it would be endleſs to purſue all that may be found in the Writers on the ſide of *Toleration*; and needleſs, becauſe they do not affect the Scheme I propoſe to be conſidered, but other Methods which they had in View: To give an Inſtance of this, Mr. *Locke* takes pains to expoſe the Abſurdity of *puniſhing* Diſſenters *to make them conſider*. The ſubſtance of what he ſays is, that "in truth Diſſenters are "puniſhed *becauſe they are Diſſenters*, and not "*to make them conſider*. That to puniſh them "*to make them conſider* is abſurd and unjuſt, be-"cauſe *ſome* may have conſidered *already*, and "it is impoſſible to diſtinguiſh *theſe*, from thoſe, "who have *not* conſidered, *&c.*" (*y*) All which

(*y*) Second Lr. for Toleration.

Reaſons, and a Hundred more ſuch, will (ſo far at leaſt as I am concerned in them) admit of a very plain and ſhort Anſwer, *viz.* By ſaying (as the Truth indeed is) that Diſſenters are puniſhed (if you will have it to be a Puniſhment) neither *becauſe they are Diſſenters*, (i. e. not *merely* becauſe they are Diſſenters) nor yet *to make them* (i. e. thoſe who are puniſhed) *conſider*. They are not puniſhed *merely* becauſe they are Diſſenters: Becauſe it is ſuppoſed that if it could certainly be known aforehand that they are *Sincere* Diſſenters, they would *not* be puniſhed. Nor are they puniſhed *to make them conſider*: Becauſe theſe Penalties being intended as a *Teſt* whereby to diſtinguiſh the *Sincere* from the *Inſincere*; it is preſumed that thoſe who ſubmit to theſe Penalties are *Sincere*, i. e. have conſidered *already*. But why then are they Puniſhed? Why, 1. They are conſidered as *Diſſenters*. This is the *Cauſa ſine qua non*; or the Circumſtance *without which* theſe Penalties would *not* be laid upon them. But then, 2. The *proper*, *immediate* Reaſon why theſe Penalties are laid upon them is, becauſe they are Men *capable of impoſing* upon the Magiſtrate, by pretending Scruples of Conſcience where there are *none*, or where under a due Care there *would* be none; and becauſe their ſubmitting to theſe Penalties hath the Nature of an Evidence to ſhew, that they do *not* impoſe upon him. Is there Senſe, I pray, in this, or is there none? If you ſay there is none, I ſhall deſire to be told the Reaſon why. Of the ſame Stamp with this, is another Objection frequently urged, both by him and by other Writers, *viz.* That thoſe who plead for *Moderate* Penalties, will in conſequence of their Principles

ciples be obliged to have recourſe to *great* ones, IF theſe *Moderate* ones WILL NOT DO. Will not do *what?* Why bring over *all* Diſſenters (I ſuppoſe) to the National Religion; or *ſo many* at leaſt as the Magiſtrate has a *mind* ſhould come over. But, this is not what this Method propoſes. On the contrary, it grants a Liberty for all thoſe to ſeparate, who ſeparate *honeſtly*, and upon a Principle of *Conſcience*; and only provides (ſo far as Human Affairs will permit) a Remedy againſt *Licentiouſneſs:* And this is what ſuch *moderate Penalties* muſt be ſuppoſed ALWAYS TO DO. It follows then from theſe Principles, that the Magiſtrate ought NEVER to proceed to *violent Meaſures.* Rather he ſhould conclude, That if the National Religion, notwithſtanding it hath all the weight of *Publick Inſtruction* on it's ſide; notwithſtanding that none are admitted to *Civil Offices*, or to any *Intereſt* in the Government, but thoſe who profeſs the National Religion; and notwithſtanding that *all* who ſeparate themſelves from the National Religion, are ſubjected to *Pecuniary Mulcts* or Impoſitions, ſo far as is conſiſtent with *Liberty* of *Conſcience:* If, I ſay, under all theſe Advantages the Magiſtrate finds that the National Religion *cannot* be ſupported, he will have Reaſon to conclude that it *ought not* to be ſupported, *i. e.* that it is not a *true* but a *falſe* Religion, which ſtands in need of being reformed.

This is what I have to offer to juſtify the lawfulneſs of *pecuniary Mulcts.* If any, ſetting theſe aſide, had rather ſtop at *Negative Diſcouragements*; I have only this to ſay, that *Pecuniary Mulcts* have a more general Influence, and (ſuppoſing them to be proportioned as they

ought to be) will be attended with no worſe Conſequences. This however I am very free to acknowledge: That if *Negative Diſcouragements* (in their full Latitude) were carefully applied; there would be the *leſs* need of any farther Proviſion. For nothing can render any Body of Diſſenters (where Truth is encouraged) *conſiderable*, but *ſuch* an *Intereſt* in the Government as makes it worth the while for deſigning Politicians (who have Ends in view ſeparate from the common Good) to court their Favour, by the Hopes of more and greater Privileges. Wherever there is a diſcontented Faction, Stateſmen will never want a Party at their Devotion.——— But with theſe I will have nothing to do. Still 'tis ſomething to do good to a *few*: And how inconſiderable ſoever the Body of Diſſenters might be ſuppoſed to be upon this Foot, conſider'd as a *Party* againſt the *Church*; yet conſider'd as *Men in Error*, they ſhould not be beneath the Magiſtrates Care, who is to look upon himſelf as much a Father to the meaneſt of his Subjects, as he is to the greateſt. And this is that which above all things recommends the Uſe of *Pecuniary Mulcts*; *viz.* that they adminiſter a Remedy where a Remedy is moſt wanted, *i. e.* to the *low* Part of Mankind, who for want of Judgment, being the moſt open to receive wrong Impreſſions, and the moſt greedy of Novelties, are therefore always the Perſons among whom *Seducers* of all ſorts reap the moſt plentiful Harveſt. I would not be miſunderſtood in what I ſay. I am not dictating to my Superiors, nor taxing them with Remiſneſs, on account of the Indulgence allowed to thoſe who differ from us: I am only (with all due ſubmiſſion to better Judgments) laying down what appears to me to be fitting

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and reaſonable upon a general View of the Caſe; leaving it to thoſe whom it concerns, to conſider how it ſuits with our own particular Circumſtances. 'Tis certain in this, as well as in all other Caſes, that a *Right* does not infer an *Obligation* to *execute* that Right. *Juſtice* is beſt exerciſed when 'tis directed by *Prudence* and *Diſcretion*: And ſince 'tis impoſſible that the Magiſtrate ſhould provide for Religion, without ſecuring that *Power* by which he is enabled to provide for it; 'tis plain that no Meaſures (however otherwiſe juſtifiable) are to be taken, which by any unhappy Situation of Affairs, appear to be inconſiſtent with the Publick Safety. But barring all ſpecial Reaſons, the Method I ſay, is juſt and equitable; in which if I am right, the Diſſenters ought not to take it amiſs that they are told of it; who may learn from hence (what of late they have ſhown themſelves more unwilling to acknowledge than becomes them) how much they are indebted to the *Clemency* of the Government under which they live, and how much it is their Duty rather to be thankful for what they have, than to be always murmuring and complaining becauſe they have not more.

In conjunction with this, and with the other Ways and Means above mentioned, there is one more of another kind, which (by the way) it may not be amiſs to take Notice of; And that is this. What if all thoſe who have a mind to ſeparate from the National Religion, ſhould, in order to obtain their Liberty, be obliged to declare ſolemnly upon *Oath*, "That "according to the *beſt* of their *Judgments* they "have *conſider'd* the Matter with *ſufficient Care*, "and that it is *againſt their Conſciences* to *con-*

" *form:* That they will at all Times hereafter, " uſe their honeſt Endeavours to *ſatisfy* their " *Conſciences*; and, ſetting aſide all *ſecular* or " *worldly* Conſiderations, be ready to comply " with the *National Religion*, as ſoon as ever " they ſhall be *convinced*, that it is *lawful* for " them ſo to do?' Would not this put many Diſſenters to a ſtand? Moſt certainly. For tho' there may be ſome who miſtake mere *Humour* and *Fancy* for *Conſcience*; and others who have *real* Scruples, which (as to themſelves) may be ſufficient to juſtify the Plea of *Conſcience:* Yet, doubtleſs there are others (and thoſe not a few) who having Senſe enough to ſee that there is nothing of any great Moment to be objected againſt our Communion, have alſo ſo much honeſty, that, were it *thus* put home upon them, whether they really believe that by *Conforming*, they ſhould be guilty of a *Sin* before God, they would not ſay it. That which leads many honeſt well meaning Perſons to diſſent from the eſtabliſhed Religion is, certainly, not that they believe they ſhould not do a *good* Thing by coming to *Church*, but, becauſe they think that by going to a *Meeting* they do a *better*. Now ſuch as theſe, 'tis plain, would all be ſecured by this Expedient: For how great ſoever the ſuppoſed Advantage of one Way of Worſhip above another may be; no Man can be ſo abſurd as to believe, that it ought to be purchaſed at the Expence of his Integrity, or that the Sin of *Perjury* will not do him much more *Harm*, than any ſuch ſuppoſed Advantage will do him *Good*. Some perhaps may think, that there is little need at this Time of Day, to multiply the Uſe of *Oaths*: And 'tis readily owned that it is a great Fault in Legiſlators

to require *Oaths*, where there are not very weighty Reaſons to juſtify it. But I am really of Opinion that the Uſe of an *Oath* in this Caſe would be liable to fewer Exceptions, than it is in moſt others, where *Oaths* are commonly practiced. For what can be more reaſonable, than that in an Affair where *Religion* and *Conſcience* only *are*, or only *ought to be*, concerned, the ſtrongeſt Security ſhould be required that *Religion* and *Conſcience* can give? The great Objection againſt the Uſe of *Oaths* is, That they are the Occaſion of leading Men into *Perjury*; and ſo indeed they too often prove, when *worldly Intereſt* ſtands on the wrong ſide. But will the Diſſenters ſay, or will any one elſe ſay it for them, that they ſeparate to ſerve their *worldly Intereſt?* If they do, they have no Right to be tolerated: and if they do not, there will be no ſort of Decency in complaining if ſuch an *Oath* ſhould be required: For this implies no greater Hardſhip than the making themſelves *Judges* of themſelves. 'Tis ſetting *Conſcience* againſt *Pretences to* Conſcience; Or, in other Words, appealing to *Conſcience* to find out the true Deciſion and Determinations of *Conſcience*.

To conclude then; The Method which I propoſe has now been laid before you in all it's general Parts: And with Reſpect to each of them it has been ſhewn, that whilſt they help to reſtrain *Licentiouſneſs* on the one Hand, they lay no real *Burden* upon *Conſcience* on the other. Now what is true of every Part, is alſo true of the whole put together: Each of them indeed has it's Weight; and therefore the united Force of all, muſt be greater than the ſeparate Force of any. This will be ſo much

much the more for the *Advantage* of true Religion, in thoſe Places where Truth is encouraged: And tho' for the ſame Reaſon it muſt be confeſſed, that it will be ſo much the more for its *Diſadvantage*, in thoſe Places where Error is eſtabliſhed in the room of Truth; yet this is a Diſadvantage which will grow *leſs* in Proportion, as the number of thoſe, who are brought over to the Truth grows *greater*: Which (ſuppoſing the Uſe of *Inſtruction*, which muſt be ſuppoſed in every Method) will always daily increaſe, where neither *Oppreſſion*, nor any other *unjuſtifiable Cauſes*, intervene to hinder. If no greater *Reſtraint* than what I have pleaded for, had ever been made uſe of in Popiſh Countries; we may venture to ſay, without the help of a Prophetic Spirit, that there had been an end of *Popery* (i. e. of all the groſs Errors of Popery) before this Time. And even now if you could remove that *Force* by which Men are chained down to her Communion, as it were, againſt their Wills; that general Corruption and Depravity of Manners among the more ſenſible Part of them, (to the introducing which *Force* hath been very greatly Inſtrumental:) If, I ſay, you could remove theſe Obſticles, it would be morally impoſſible that *Proteſtantiſm*, which is in the main a very reaſonable Religion, ſhould not get ground, and at length for the moſt part prevail. Much time indeed muſt be allowed for the conquering inveterate Prejudices; and more perhaps will be neceſſary under the Uſe of this Method, than under the Method of thoſe who are for entirely ſeparating Religion from the Conveniencies, and Inconveniencies of this World. But here lies the great Difference. One Method is more ſlow; the other leſs ſure.

One

One is calculated for a continuance; the other in a little time will grow good for nothing: One tends to throw the whole weight of *Human Authority* on the ſide of true Religion; the other diveſts it of all aid from *Human Authority*, and leaves as much room for *Appetite* and *Paſſion* to operate, as for *Reaſon* and *Conſcience*. There needs no great Sagacity to find out which of theſe two Methods is the beſt: And this I ſay, that whatever preſent Advantages might be felt from an *abſolute Indulgence*, or from putting Truth and Error upon the ſame Foot as to all *Civil Privileges*, in ſome Concerns of the World; Magiſtrates would ſoon ſee the Neceſſity of coming back to ſome Order again, to prevent that Decay of Religion and Piety which would every where enſue.

There may perhaps be other Cauſes beſides that which I have mentioned, which contribute towards preventing a Reformation in Popiſh Countries, with which this Method is not particularly concerned. Of this ſort are the *Intrigues* of *Princes* and *Politicians*, who turn Religion into a *Tool* of *State*. Of this ſort too, are the *Avarice* and *Tenaciouſneſs* of certain *religious Orders* of Men, who have engroſſed more of the Publick Wealth than falls to their ſhare; and know not how to reform, becauſe they know not how to refund. This latter Cauſe made a Reformation ſo difficult among ourſelves; that nothing but the Reſolution of a Prince puſhed on by ſtrong Paſſions could, ſo ſoon at leaſt, have brought it to paſs. And perhaps it may be no untrue Obſervation, if I ſay, that the ill Uſe that was made of the Revenues of the Church on that Occaſion, has had no mean ſhare in deterring other Nations from

from following our Example. But let but theſe Abuſes be firſt rectified; Let but Magiſtrates once ſeriouſly ſet themſelves to promote what they think to be Truth and Righteouſneſs; Let but *Churchmen* have every where ſuch a Maintenance as is convenient for them, *i. e.* ſuch a Maintenance as places them beneath the Envy of great Men, and yet above the Scorn and Contempt of thoſe whom they are to influence by their Example and Authority, as well as by their Inſtruction; And let them but be ſecure, that when you deſign to *reform* you do not mean to *plunder*: Let I ſay, but theſe great Points be taken care of, and you will not find National Reformations to be ſuch hard Things. Or if you do, it muſt then be ſaid, that Mankind are moſt untractable Creatures: That there is little or no Senſe of Religion or Regard to God in the World: And whether, in this State of the Caſe, more good might be expected by giving up every Man wholly to himſelf, let any reaſonable Perſon judge. Rather ſhould we conclude in ſuch a Caſe, that human Means (which have their certain Period, beyond which they cannot go) are now at an End; and therefore, that, for what is farther neceſſary, our Buſineſs is humbly to depend upon the good Providence of God, who has Means in his Hands which we know not of; which he will certainly make Uſe of, when he ſees it to be convenient.

I ſhall detain the Reader no longer than whilſt I mention one Caſe more, which is,

VI. The Caſe of thoſe who join in NO Way of *Publick Worſhip* at all. This after what has been ſaid, will admit of a very ſhort and eaſy Solution: It being obvious to underſtand that the

the Methods above laid down, have the ſame Propriety here as in other Caſes. But what ſhall we ſay as to *Force?* I Anſwer, 1. If all Ways of religious Worſhip be prohibited but *one*, all *Force* is unjuſt. For to uſe *Force* upon Men becauſe they will not join in *ſome* Way of religious Worſhip, when there is but *one* Way to join in; is to uſe Force to compel them to join in *that one* Way; which muſt needs be unreaſonable, becauſe the Foundation from whence this Neceſſity either of joining in *one* Way or in *no* Way ariſeth, is itſelf unreaſonable. The Magiſtrate, I have ſhewn, has no Right to uſe Force to ſuppreſs all Religions but *one*. If ſo he can have no Right to compel Men to join in *that one* Way. For a greater Liberty always implies a leſs; and 'tis certainly a leſs Liberty barely *not to join* in that Way which is preſcribed by the Magiſtrate, than it is to ſet up *other* Ways in oppoſition to it. But, 2. If there be an abſolute Liberty to every Man to chuſe what Religion he pleaſes, or a Liberty under ſuch Reſtraints only as have afore been mentioned: I think that in this Caſe, thoſe who neglect to join in *any one* Way of Publick Worſhip, are puniſhable with any degree of Severity, that the Magiſtrate thinks fit to make uſe of. For tho' (as I ſaid juſt now) when all Ways of Religious Worſhip are prohibited but *one*, the Liberty of not joining in *that one* Way is a leſs Liberty, than the Liberty of ſetting up *other* Ways in oppoſition to it; Yet it is plain, that when all Ways are allowed, the Liberty of joining in *no* Way is the greateſt Liberty of all. And a Liberty, I ſay, it is, not to be endured, becauſe it cannot be ſupported by any Plea of *Conſcience*. Many Chriſtians (for of

Chriſtians

Chriſtians only I would now be underſtood to ſpeak) cannot join in *this* or in *that* Way of Publick Worſhip, conſiſtently with their Conſciences. But never was it yet heard of, nor am I able to apprehend, that it ſhould be againſt the Conſcience of a Chriſtian to join in *ſome* Way, provided that Way may be of his own chuſing. But may not a good Man be ſuppoſed, ſo far to diſapprove of *all* the Ways of Worſhip which are *in uſe* in any Country, as to think himſelf obliged to join in *none* of them? The Caſe is poſſible to be conceived I own. But if all Ways be tolerated, 'tis a Caſe which in Fact is not likely to happen, becauſe there is no probability that any Man ſhould be ſo ſingular in his Opinions, as not to be able to find enough of the ſame Mind to make a ſeparate Congregation. But if all Ways of Worſhip are *not* tolerated, tho' there be but one ſingle Exception, the Thing will be a great deal more than poſſible: And in that Caſe it will be right, that *Diſſenters* and *Abſenters*, conſider'd as ſuch, ſhould have one and the ſame Treatment. A *Papiſt*, for inſtance, can join in *no* Way of Publick Worſhip *in uſe* here in *England*. Therefore it would be unjuſt to be ſevere upon Papiſts purely upon that Account. But ſetting this Caſe, and ſuch like Caſes aſide, the Rule is true, that thoſe who will not of their own accord join in *ſome one* Way of Publick Worſhip, ought to be compelled to it; which if it does *them* no good, (which nevertheleſs it is to be hoped that it will) it will be for the good of *others*, as it helps to remove the influence of bad Examples.

I would be underſtood (as I ſaid juſt now) to ſpeak all this of *profeſſed Chriſtians*: For as to thoſe who profeſſing themſelves to be *no* Chriſtians, do likewiſe join in *no way* of Publick Worſhip; their Caſe is of ſo little concern to us at preſent, that I do not think it worth the Pains to examine it.

FINIS.

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